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9. ABSTRACT
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The study is divided into two parts. The first part examines in aggregate terms the role that agriculture has played in the South Korean economy after first setting down the major institutional arrangements for local government and rural development in recent Korean history. From this macro-level survey of rural local institutions and rural development, the study proceeds to examine the findings of a field trip to two rural counties. Based on the micro-level analysis drawn from this field study, some general conclusions concerning the role of local governing institutions in rural development in South Korea is presented.

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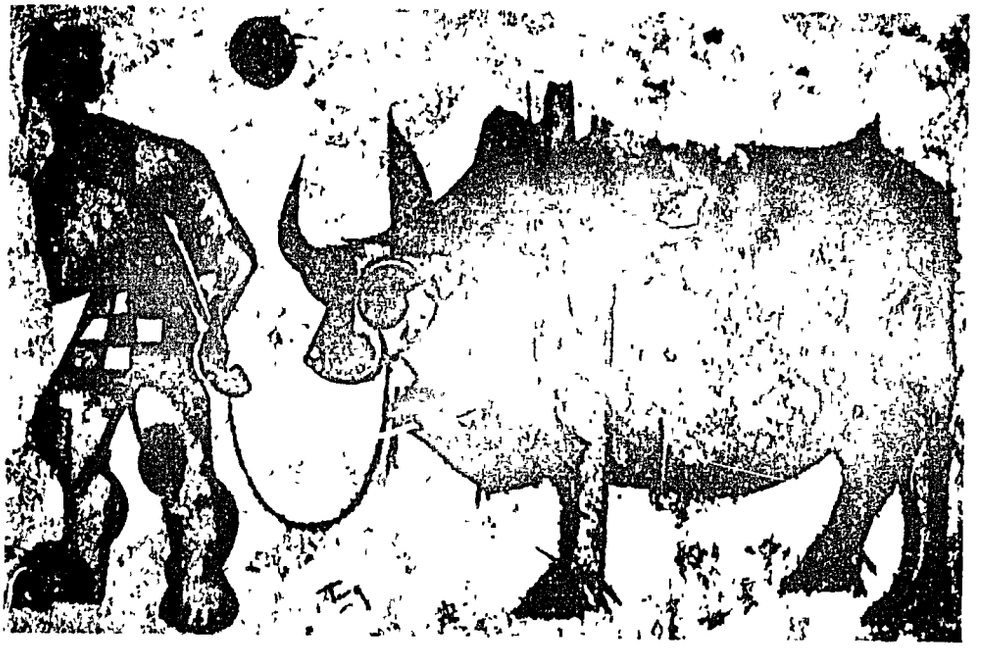

Special Series on Rural Local Government

LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH KOREA

Ronald Aqua

RLG No. 13

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

IN SOUTH KOREA

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FOREWORD

This monograph was written as part of a comparative study of Rural Local Government organized by the Rural Development Committee of Cornell University. The study aimed at clarifying the role of rural local institutions in the rural development process, with special reference to agricultural productivity, income, local participation and rural welfare. An interdisciplinary working group set up under the Rural Development Committee established a comparative framework for research and analysis of these relationships.[1] A series of monographs, based in most cases on original field research, has been written by members of the working group and by scholars at other institutions and has been published by the Rural Development Committee. An analysis and summary of the study's findings has been written for the working group by Norman Uphoff and Milton Esman and has been published separately.

This study of Rural Local Government is part of the overall program of teaching and research by members of the Rural Development Committee, which functions under the auspices of the Center for International Studies at Cornell and is chaired by Norman Uphoff. The main focuses of Committee concern are alternative strategies and institutions for promoting rural development, especially with respect to the situation of small farmers, rural laborers and their families. This particular study was financed in large part by a grant from the Asia Bureau of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The views expressed by participating scholars in this study are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of USAID or Cornell University.

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[1] The members of the working group were Ron Aqua, Douglas Ashford, John Blackton, Harry Blair, Milton Esman, Mohinder Mudahar, Norman Nicholson, David Robinson, Benedict Stavis, and Norman Uphoff.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Millions of Americans have set foot on Korean soil for many different reasons, and yet Americans as a people know surprisingly little about that volatile and crowded peninsula. As one who went to Korea for a tour of duty in the Peace Corps in 1970, only to depart after eighteen months with most of the pieces of the Korean puzzle still jumbled in my mind, I welcomed the opportunity to return again in 1973 under the auspices of the Rural Development Committee of Cornell University in connection with its comparative study of rural local government.

While in Korea, I had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with many students and scholars at the Seoul National University Graduate School of Public Administration, and they gave freely of their time and displayed considerable patience in the face of my persistent questioning. In particular, Mr. Kim Chong-cho led me through the bureaucratic maze of the national ministries and helped me acquire a considerable collection of statistics and other published materials. Mr. Park Key-young served as a loyal research assistant through several weeks of field research in the Korean countryside, and was as knowledgeable about farming and farmers as about administration and administrators (a combination of assets that I found exceedingly rare in one person). Dr. Chung Kun-mo generously allowed me the use of his office at the Korean Advanced Institute of Science and his staff rendered much courteous service.

Back at Cornell, I have benefited greatly from the comments and suggestions provided for an earlier draft of this paper by members of the Working Group on Rural Local Government, as well as from the stimulation provided by a workshop on Korean local government that had three notable students of Korean affairs among its participants: Vincent Brandt, Kang Pyung-kun, and Princeton Lyman. Norman Uphoff the Working Group's chairman, has proved to be a stern and dedicated taskmaster.

My wife Maeja, who was born in a tiny Korean village that even today lacks electricity or an all-weather road, was and is my best informant on Korea and its rural people. During our field research, she proved to be the most capable interviewer and interpreter of what was going on around us, and frequently steered me away from hasty or ill-founded observations.

Ultimately, of course, I alone must accept responsibility for the format, tone, and conclusions of this study. I accept that responsibility with the added burden of knowing that many South Korean farmers and public officials regarded me as a unique medium for them to express their daily concerns to a larger, unknown audience. I hope I have merited their trust and confidence.

Ronald Aqua
Cornell University

INTRODUCTION

The decade of the nineteen-sixties was a period of unprecedented economic growth in South Korea, as President Park Chung Hee offered the Korean people the prospect of rapid industrialization and modernization within the context of maintaining a strong national defense and relative political stability. Significant American and, after 1965, Japanese commitments, both official and private, served to bolster this prospect, and Koreans experienced a new sense of national self-confidence and pride as they pointed to large annual increases in their Gross National Product.

While industrialization proceeded apace with the infusion of large amounts of foreign capital, the agricultural sector witnessed much smaller and more irregular gains by contrast. The disparity between industrial and agricultural growth was exacerbated by heavy concentration on infrastructural improvements within and between major urban industrial and commercial centers at the expense of the rural areas of the nation. That so many rural inhabitants moved to the cities in increasing numbers indicated their growing awareness of the fact that urban workers were more likely than they to share in the fruits of modernization. This, in turn, placed great strains both on new areas of urban concentration and on the supply of labor available for intensive cultivation of important grain crops.

By the end of the nineteen-sixties the South Korean government began to undertake a serious reconsideration of the economic and social consequences of unbalanced growth. One major outcome of this re-evaluation process was the implementation of a rural mobilization campaign aimed at enhancing rural living standards while fostering a spirit of cooperation and self-help within rural settlements. This New Community Movement, begun in 1971, was very much alive in the summer of 1973 when I conducted the field work for the present study, and all the agencies that are involved in the day-to-day administration of programs concerned with rural development were busily engaged in carrying out New Community Movement tasks.

Thus, while industrialization still maintains its predominant position among the developmental objectives of the South Korean government, the problems facing the rural areas have come increasingly to the fore and the government has begun to respond. The scale and durability of this response remain to be seen, but certainly the initial impact of recent policies ought to be evaluated in terms of the stress they have placed upon an already overburdened and underfinanced local administrative apparatus and upon the individual farmers who have become directly and personally involved in New Community Movement activities. One serious obstacle to this kind of evaluation has been the lack of any systematic treatment of either central-local relations in the Korean administrative context or citizen-government relations in rural areas.

This study is primarily concerned with the general issue of what role local governmental agencies have played in rural development in South Korea and will not attempt a systematic consideration of either central-local or government-citizen relations.[1] Both of these topics are germane to our more general analysis, however, and will receive some attention within a broader context. The approach will be largely descriptive, and while some provocative conclusions will be suggested, the author must emphasize the limited scope of his field work and the fact that any study of a nation that is undergoing rapid social and economic change cannot avoid the limitations of a restricted time frame of analysis.

The study is divided into two parts. The first part will examine in aggregate terms the role that agriculture has played in the South Korean economy after first setting down the major institutional arrangements for local government and rural development in recent Korean history. From this macro-level survey of rural local institutions and rural development, the study will proceed to examine the findings of a field trip to two rural counties. Based on the micro-level analysis drawn from this field study, some general conclusions concerning the role of local governing institutions in rural development in South Korea will be presented.

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[1] Neither will it attempt an assessment of the New Community Movement as such since it is relatively new and no final conclusions can be drawn about it.

PART I:

RURAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Introduction to Part I

At present almost all the organizations above the hamlet (or "natural village") level that are in some way involved in rural development in South Korea are governmental or quasi-public agencies whose common structural feature is a set of strong vertical linkages to higher-level organizations which eventually culminate in central organizations in Seoul. It is important to stress at the outset that although this study is concerned with the role of local government in rural development, South Korea does not possess a local government system at all resembling the conventional model of a popularly-elected council cum executive body. There are, of course, offices at the township (or village), county (or city), and provincial (or special city) levels which conduct business that has traditionally been associated elsewhere with "local government," but these bodies are not directly responsible to the people they serve. The public has no recourse through elections or other institutional means of popular control to influence local governmental policy.

It should also be pointed out that there is no significant tradition in Korean history of powerful "intermediate-range" groups such as mercantile guilds or feudal fiefdoms which could have served as alternate power centers to the national capital. "Centralization," as a singular theme through centuries of Korean history, has been characterized in the following terms:

> The society lacked clearly defined, separate units to modify or control this central power. No different races or cultures existed to confront each other within it. Religious differences were insufficiently concentrated in any broadly based local or social group to permit the firm formation of cohesive opposition or discrete interest. Exclusion of foreign trade and the control and derogation of commercial functions by the central bureaucracy prevented the development of business classes, ports, or specialization that could serve local strength. Local institutions were weak and diffuse, local administration offered no prestige, and ambitious

young men saw no use in associations and careers below the center.[1]

While certain religious movements succeeded in mobilizing groups of people for shorter periods, and rural-based learning centers fostered opposition to central dictates among an isolated and alienated group of scholars, neither these nor other locally-based institutions seemed to provide the organizational capacity required to affect significantly the overall centralizing process.[2]

B. Local Administration--A Branch of the Center

For centuries prior to the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910-1945), rural villages and hamlets were left largely to their own devices provided that order was maintained, taxes paid, and corvée-labor performed. Centrally-appointed magistrates dispensed justice and relied heavily on local clerks to complete the routine tasks of administering the tax laws and maintaining the local records. The magistrates were subject to frequent transfer as a means of preventing their accumulation of political leverage in any one region, and the clerks were so poorly treated and held in such low esteem by central officials that they, too, were usually unable to build local power bases (although they were occasionally successful in accumulating small fortunes and considerable land holdings based on their familiarity with tax laws and control of local property records).[3]

The Japanese greatly altered this system during their occupation of Korea, however, with the introduction of elected local advisory councils, a limited suffrage for certain groups of Koreans, and somewhat later, the granting of very restricted legislative powers to the local councils that previously had been only advisory

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[1]Gregory Henderson, Korea: The Politics of the Vortex (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 195-196.

[2]Henderson, pp. 26-29, 34-35.

[3]Henderson, pp. 47-49.

bodies.[1] But despite these innovations in the 1920's and early 1930's, the Japanese Government-General still retained strict central control over the appointment and dismissal of local executives and closely supervised all local governmental activities, exercising its veto power when this was deemed necessary.

The administrative structure established by the Japanese featured a four-tier system with the township or incorporated village serving as the basic "local autonomous unit," a designation that appears misleading to outsiders considering the actual powers granted to this unit. All activities conducted by the "local autonomous unit" were transmitted down through two intervening bureaucratic layers, the counties and the provinces, and these activities were ultimately subject to the supervision of the Department of Home Affairs.[2] This four-tier structure was adopted in practically unchanged form by the American Occupation Government after World War II, and it closely resembles the present structure in outward, if not internal, organization.

Below this legal administrative structure was the quasi-governmental neighborhood association (ri), a form of social organization at the hamlet level whose earliest known existence has been traced back to 57 B.C.[3] This historical structure was incorporated into the overall governmental hierarchy by the Japanese as an important administrative arm at the local level to facilitate the recruitment and conscription of laborers for work projects and soldiers for the Imperial Army. As mobilization efforts intensified in the late 1930's, the neighborhoods and even smaller units served increasingly as devices for political and social control, a system not unknown in Japan proper.

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[1] Pyung-kun Kang, The Role of Local Government in Community Development in Korea (University of Minnesota, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1966), pp. 78-92.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Chang-hyun Cho, "Bureaucracy and Local Government in South Korea," in Se-jin Kim and Chang-hyun Cho, (eds.), Government and Politics of Korea (Silver Springs, Md., the Research Institute on Korean Affairs, 1972), p. 113.

During the Japanese occupation, the position of the average Korean farmer declined drastically. In part this was due to a comprehensive Japanese land survey (1910-18), after which a few unscrupulous Koreans who were educated enough to understand the new land registration laws (many were local clerks) joined with the incoming Japanese settlers and the Japanese Government-General in depriving many ignorant farmers of their land. Tenancy among Koreans increased from 37.7% in 1918 (after the land survey) to 53.8% by 1932.[1]

Several organizations were established by the Japanese to provide rural credit and banking services, as well as certain agricultural extension services, and these will receive more attention in the next section. The establishment of these centrally-inspired and centrally-directed organizations no doubt contributed to significant increases in crop yields and to the diversification and scientific upgrading of Korean agricultural practices during this period, but the effect on the average Korean farmer seems to have been minimal in terms of improving his standard of living.[2]

In the early 1930's, the Japanese Governor-General, Ugaki Isse, inaugurated one of the first serious rural development schemes in modern Korean history.[3] His plans included the designation of model villages, the establishment of Village Development Committees, provision for training local leaders, and more generally, stressing the role of local government in rural development. His scheme was cut short, however, by the measures taken in 1937 and thereafter to increase the pool of Korean manpower available for Japanese factories and mines.

Following the end of the American occupation of Korea and the termination of hostilities in the Korean peninsula between the north and south, a new attempt was made to establish elements of popular participation and electoral responsibility at the local level of government. In 1952 local elections were conducted to select town councils which, in turn, selected town executives (mayors). These local councils could, by a 2/3 vote of no-confidence in a mayor's policies, force his resignation.

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[1] Henderson, p. 77.

[2] Hoon K. Lee, Land Utilization and Rural Economy in Korea (Shanghai, Kelly and Walsh, Ltds., 1936), pp. 274-280.

[3] Kang, pp. 107-114.

This system was amended several times during the Syngman Rhee era, first to provide for the popular election of the mayor and the elimination of the no-confidence voting mechanism (1956), and later to revert from an electoral selection process to an appointive one for the mayor, a throwback to the earlier Japanese colonial regime. After the overthrow of Syngman Rhee, the short-lived Chang Myŏn government reinstated the original 1952 elective system minus its no-confidence voting feature, but rapid changeover in 1961 to a military government under Park Chung Hee brought about substantial revisions that have remained in effect until the present time.

Arguing that under the elective system local politicians were able to manipulate local resources to their own advantage, that the local 'situation' had become over-politicized, and that local factional disputes had become intensified, Park ordered the "temporary" suspension of electoral activities and town council meetings. Shortly thereafter, the basic "local autonomous unit" was changed from the town level, where it had been since Japanese colonial days, to the kun (county) level, which, possessing a larger resource base and a larger population than the town, could allegedly overcome petty intra-village factionalism and escape the financial constraints that hampered the smaller units. In addition, it was argued that a larger electoral base would produce more highly-qualified leaders, since competition would be more intense and the number of available candidates much larger.[1]

The "temporary" suspension of elections and council activities has proved to be enduring. Today, the conduct of local government in South Korea more closely resembles what it had been in the early days of the Japanese occupation that at any time since the end of the Korean war.

The administrative hierarchy that governs local administration is illustrated in Figure 1.

South Korea's two largest cities, Seoul and Pusan, are under the direct supervision of the central government, the former attached to the Prime Minister's office and the latter operating more or less as a separate province. All other local units lie within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Home Affairs, which exercises considerable authority in most areas of governmental policy at the sub-national level. The Ministry of Home Affairs has two bureaus, the Bureau of Local Administration and the Bureau of Police; the former

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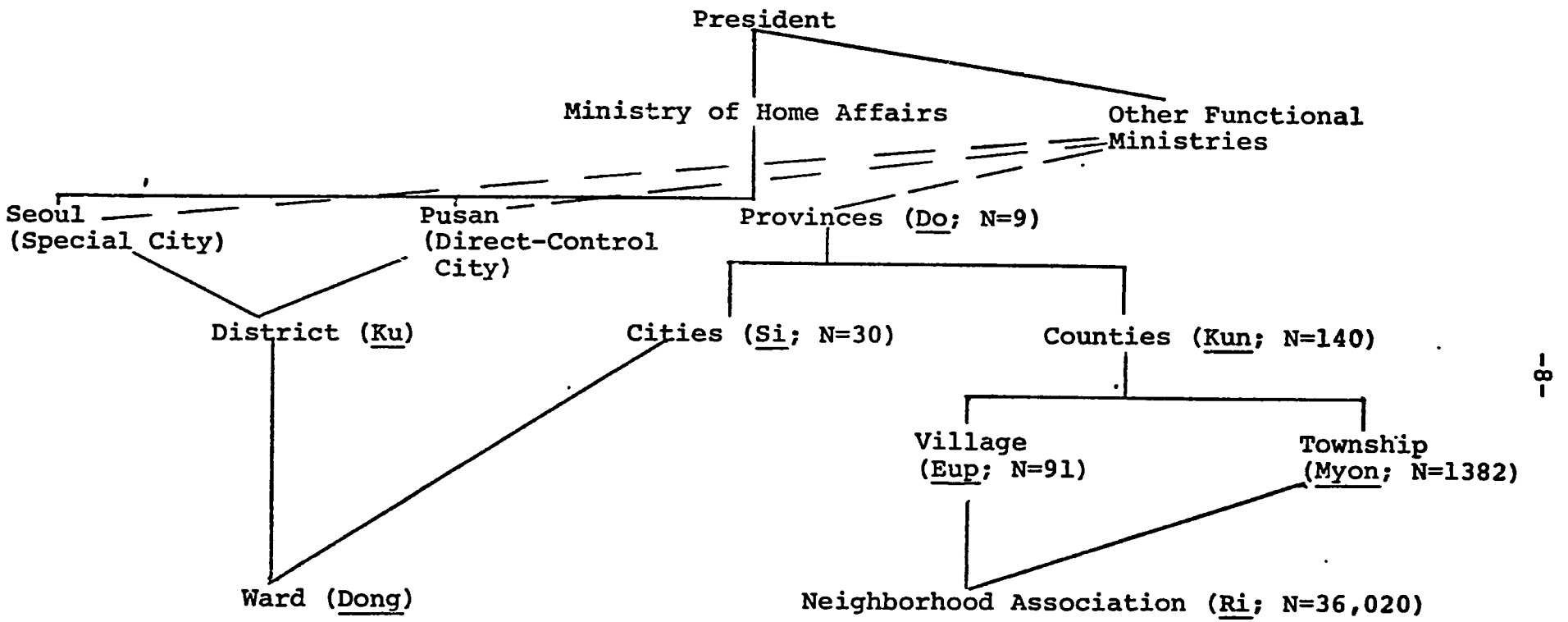
[1] Kang, pp. 155-157.

Figure 1: Organization of Local Administration in South Korea



Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Home Affairs, Local Government in Korea (December, 1972), p. 17.

is most directly involved in the day-to-day implementation of local government policy, while the latter functions somewhat independently and is even more highly-centralized than the local government system. Other central ministries also exercise varying degrees of control over lower-level governmental bodies within their respective functional areas.

Except for 1962, which was the year that Park Chung Hee's military government was attempting to establish its legitimacy before calling for a reversion to civilian rule, the size of the local government sector in proportion to the national sector, in terms of settled revenue accounts, has held steady at roughly one-third of overall government expenditure. This can be seen in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Comparison of Local Finance (Settled Revenues) with National Finance (Settled Revenues), 1962-1971 (Real in millions of won; index: 1953=100)

	National		Local		Local (Real) as % of National (Real)
	Index	Real	Index	Real	
1962	2390	75550	1714	13701	18.1
1963	1925	60844	2422	19358	31.8
1964	1997	63151	2679	21552	34.1
1965	3336	105481	3570	28526	27.0
1966	4864	153777	5694	45500	29.5
1967	6296	199018	7692	61465	30.8
1968	8722	275717	9580	76549	27.7
1969	11896	376041	15305	122293	32.5
1970	14104	445856	18201	145430	32.6
1971	17568	555345	22483	179644	32.3

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bureau of Local Administration, Finance Abstract of Local Government, 1972, p. 436.

These figures can be somewhat misleading, however, since during the same period local governments experienced a shrinking tax base relative to national tax resources while the demands placed on them for expenditures were constantly increasing. This diminished local tax capability is reflected in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of Local Tax Revenues with National Tax Revenues by Year (in millions of won)

	National	Local	Local as % of National
1962	28242	5215	18.4
1963	30303	7404	24.4
1964	36563	8800	24.1
1965	54634	11359	20.7
1966	87646	16131	18.4
1967	129241	14070	10.8
1968	156407	19305	12.3
1969	262823	26511	10.0
1970	334723	29480	8.8
1971	423998	39813	9.3

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bureau of Local Administration, Financial Abstract of Local Government, 1972, p. 436.

As the financial plight of local governments progressively worsened, most of them looked to the center for supplementary funds to sustain at least minimum development efforts. The major exceptions to this general trend have been the two largest metropolitan areas, Seoul and Pusan, which have managed to remain at a relatively high level of fiscal self-sufficiency (Table 3).

If growing financial dependence on the center is any indication of diminishing local control over governmental affairs, then clearly the South Korean case provides one more example of a political system in which local units relinquish effective program control to higher levels because of their inability to underwrite the additional social overhead costs placed upon them by a modernizing central elite.

Table 3: Self-Reliance of General Account of Local Government by Year (in percentage)

	All Local Units	Provinces	Seoul	Pusan
1965	51.7%	44.1%	96.4%	90.2%
1966	48.1%	35.8%	97.5%	89.6%
1967	35.7%	25.9%	76.1%	64.4%
1968	39.5%	26.7%	83.7%	71.6%
1969	42.6%	31.8%	88.7%	68.5%
1970	38.5%	25.1%	90.2%	63.7%
1971	37.1%	23.6%	89.7%	64.3%
1972	49.2%	19.6%	91.7%	71.4%

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bureau of Local Administration, Financial Abstract of Local Government, 1972, pp. 464-465.

Since in the second part of this study we will be concerned with the role of local government in rural development, it would be useful to specify which level of the system we have just described will constitute rural local government. Seoul and Pusan, the two major metropolitan areas of South Korea, can be excluded at the outset, along with cities (generally having populations above 50,000) and most villages (with 20,000 to 50,000 population and mixed service, commercial, and agricultural activities). Except for these, most governmental units at the county level and below are situated in areas largely engaged in agricultural production, and these will be the focal point of our study. Unlike Taiwan and Japan, where a third or more of rural household income is often derived from non-agricultural sources and many rural areas have taken on a mixed agricultural-industrial character,[1]

[1]See Tadashi Fukutake, Japanese Rural Society (Ithaca, Cornell University Press), 1972, pp. 24-25 for figures on Japan, and Benedict Stavis, Rural Local Governance and Agricultural Development in Taiwan (Ithaca, Center for International Studies, Rural Development Committee, 1974), Figure 5.

South Korean farmers generally derive four-fifths or more of their income from agriculture and are only marginally involved in fishing, handicrafts, or small-scale industries as secondary occupations. This is reflected in Table 4.

Table 4: Percentage of Total Per Farm Household Income Derived from Agriculture

1962	73.6%
1963	75.8%
1964	81.0%
1965	76.6%
1966	77.2%
1967	77.1%
1968	77.3%
1969	77.9%
1970	78.2%
1971	81.9%

Source: Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, Korea Statistical Yearbook, 1972, p. 144.

Significantly, there seems to be no recent trend toward growing reliance on outside income sources to supplement agricultural income, although some government programs have stressed "diversification of industry" in the countryside.

The main transmission link between the local levels with which we will be concerned and the central ministries is the province. The pivotal position of this intermediate layer of administration predates even the Japanese reorganization of local government. The province has no real autonomous functions, and its system of personnel recruitment, budgeting, planning, and other bureaucratic functions comes under the direct tutelage of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The highest-ranking provincial executives are usually appointed from the ranks of career civil servants in the Ministry of Home Affairs or from high provincial-level positions.

While the actual day-to-day operations of the "local autonomous unit" (the county) and the township level below it will be discussed in considerable detail in Part II, let us first enumerate here the officially-prescribed functions of these levels. The South Korean government divides the activities of local government into three groups, as follows:[1]

1. Autonomous affairs: including organization and administrative affairs, affairs pertaining to the promotion of welfare projects for citizens (public works, city planning, public utilities, sanitation, hospitals and other public facilities), and affairs concerning education, arts, and culture.

2. Affairs assigned to local autonomous bodies by the state: including highway maintenance, prevention of communicable diseases, employment programs, tax collection, product inspection, sanitary inspection, and protection of youth and the mentally deranged.

3. Affairs assigned to executive organs by the state: including economic planning, flood and erosion control, farm development and reform, promotion of local industry, personal registration matters, presidential and national assembly elections, maintenance and control of rivers and streams, and affairs of the central government's departments which are disposed of within local autonomous bodies.

In practice, the overwhelming number of activities performed by "local autonomous bodies" are initiated and closely supervised by national ministries, and the tripartite functional separation of local affairs is meaningful only is a legalistic sense.

In the area of taxation, local governments execute nationally-defined tax laws and serve as principal collection agents for the other administrative levels. Through a complicated allocative procedure, local authorities collect eight kinds of "ordinary taxes" (sub-divided into provincial-level and city/county-level taxes) and two "special-purpose taxes." Only a small portion of these revenues are retained by the local unit that collects them; most funds are sent to higher levels whence some portion is returned to the local governments in the form of grants and subsidies.[2]

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[1] Republic of Korea, Ministry of Home Affairs, Local Government in Korea (Seoul, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1972), pp. 41-45.

[2] Ibid, pp. 69-75.

By the end of 1971, there were 74,000 public officials at the "local autonomous" level. Of these, approximately 18% were nationally-appointed (usually the highest-ranking bureau and section chiefs), and the rest locally-appointed but subject to central personnel policies and supervision.[1] A critical feature of central control over local affairs throughout centuries of Korean history has been the center's domination of the examination, appointment, transfer, promotion, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel at all levels. The central-local distinction in personnel systems pertains more to salary grades and prestige factors than to any real difference in central domination of either system.[2]

The "local autonomous body," the county, is the main coordinating agency at the local level for several other governmental organizations. Among these, the two that are most directly concerned with rural development efforts are the cooperatives and the Rural Guidance Offices. The background and operation of these two agencies will be described in the following sections.

C. Agricultural Cooperatives

Although Korean farmers have traditionally organized themselves in cooperative societies for communal labor and mutual financial aid (kye), national centrally-directed organizations to serve the farmers' needs were first established under the Japanese. After the Korean War, separate agencies to provide credit and conduct agricultural business activities were reorganized several times. In August, 1961, the two main bodies, the Agricultural Banks and the Agricultural Cooperatives, were merged to form the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF). The organization structure of the NACF is shown in Figure 2.

Primary cooperatives, formed by more than twenty individual farmers who must each purchase at least one and not more than 300 shares of stock valued at 1000 won per share, operate at the township level. There is currently an average of 1,400 farmers in each primary unit due to a merger movement that has been going on for several years.

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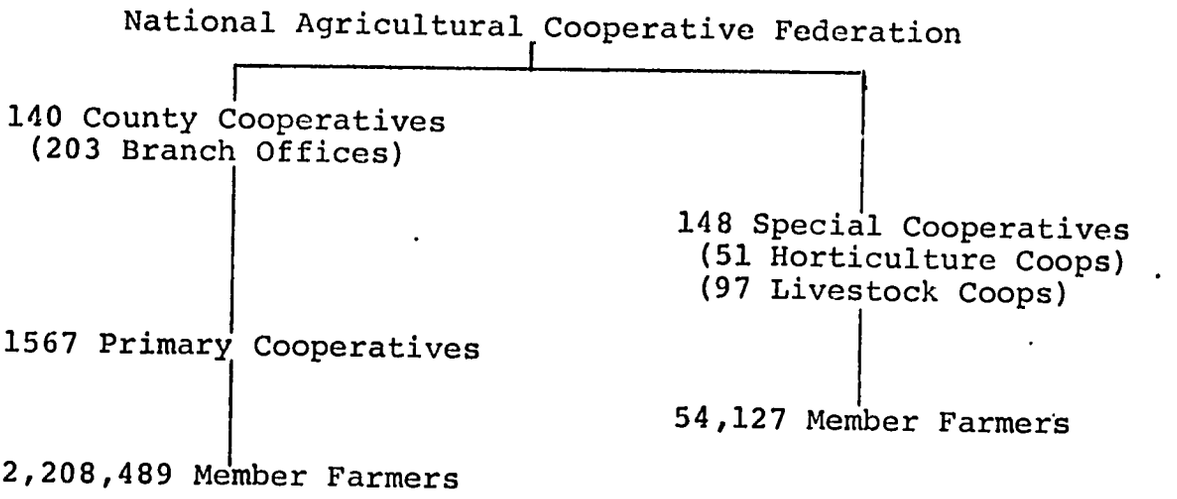
[1] Ibid., p. 59.

[2] Very recent changes in the local personnel system do not alter this general observation. See The Korea Herald, May 5, 1974, p. 3.

From 1962 to 1971, the number of primary cooperatives declined from 21,518 to 4,512, and this had dropped even further, to 1,567, by May, 1973.[1]

Figure 2: NACF Organizational Structure



Source: National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Agricultural Cooperatives in Korea (May 1973), p. 6.

Agricultural cooperatives at the local level are highly integrated into the central NACF, which regulates and supervises lower-level units and controls planning, policy-making, and personnel affairs at all levels. Korean cooperatives are multi-function agencies and are involved in the following activities: purchase and sales of farm production materials (including a monopoly on fertilizer distribution, as well as competitive retailing of agro-chemicals, farm implements and machinery, and feed stuffs); sale of consumer goods and operation of non-profit chain stores at the primary level (457 chain stores by the end

[1] National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Annual Report, 1971 (NACF, Seoul, Korea, 1972), 39, and National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Agricultural Cooperatives in Korea (NACF, Seoul, Korea, 1973), p. 6.

of 1971); marketing and sales to UN military forces and general marketing; foreign trade; utilization and processing (including warehousing, transportation, feed-mixing, and artificial insemination); credit and banking (demand-deposit); mutual insurance, including life insurance and crop damage insurance; farm guidance, education, and information; and management and marketing research.[1] At the local level, primary cooperatives are most directly involved in financial services, marketing and purchasing, and sales of production materials, while the other functions are administered at higher levels.

Although primary cooperative financial services are generally conducted through the utilization of locally-generated financial resources, this by no means permits the local units to operate independently of higher levels in the system. In addition, both at the local and central levels, coop activities are closely regulated and supervised by central government ministries, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of Finance, and it is not uncommon at any level to have extensive interaction between government officials and coop officials. In no sense is the cooperative movement in South Korea a locally-generated and locally-sustained voluntary effort. It has all the trappings of centralization so frequently alluded to throughout this study.

D. Rural Guidance and Extension Services

Again it is necessary to turn to the Japanese occupation period to account for the origin of national programs designed to enhance agricultural production through the establishment of research stations, extension programs, and technical services related to the detection of crop disease and other similar problems. Little effort was made to improve upon this colonial apparatus until local offices of Agricultural Guidance were set up upon the recommendation of an advisory team from the University of Minnesota in 1957. Shortly thereafter, the government established local Community Development Committees (1958) and Agricultural Guidance Committees (1959) to coordinate and promote rural extension services. These bodies were replaced in 1962 by Farm-Village Development Committees (deliberative bodies of local elites) and Offices of Farm-Village Development (administrative bodies concerned more directly with extension services).[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 8-18.

[2] Kang, pp. 213-216.

At present, local extension services are conducted mainly by Rural Guidance Offices (RGO), which are vertically linked to the Office of Rural Development (ORD), a central agency attached to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. RGO's have witnessed a considerable expansion in the number of activities of their personnel over the past decade, and are currently involved in such programs as providing technical information and testing services to farmers, conducting demonstration projects and model farms, and providing direction and leadership for 4-H groups and Life Improvement Societies for farmers and their wives.

County and township RGO's are linked horizontally to their respective local government offices and technically come under the legal jurisdiction of the county government. Budgeting is conducted through the county government, but personnel and overall policy direction is provided, as in the case of the cooperatives, through the central agency, in this case the ORD. More will be said of these various intergovernmental relationships in the second part of the study.

E. General Direction of Government Policy vis-à-vis the Rural Sector

A fundamental restructuring of land-holding patterns under the tutelage of American advisors around the time of the Korean war resulted in the virtual elimination of farms above three hectares in area (the legal maximum limit under the land reform) and the widespread appearance of extremely marginal owner-cultivators having less than one hectare. "By 1957 an estimated 1.5 million farmers had acquired some 1.2 million acres of land on which they had formerly been tenants or farm workers...[Under a meager compensation scheme,] all but the largest and most agile landowners were pauperized."[1]

This redistribution of wealth in the countryside had important implications not only for a social structure that had as one of its principal components a landlord class, but also for methods of agricultural production. The continued emphasis on individual small-holding agriculture placed increased reliance on labor-intensive cultivation techniques and served to de-emphasize mechanization and other related capital-intensive cultivating practices.

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[1]Henderson, p. 197.

Rural conditions stagnated through the 1950's, and one of the first attempts by the Park Chung Hee military government to alleviate this state of affairs was the commencement in 1962 of a rural mobilization campaign called the National Movement for Reconstruction.[1] This program was short-lived, however (it was allowed to die in 1964). Although several 'false starts' were attempted thereafter, the next significant program was the New Community Movement, inaugurated in 1971.

According to an official government description, the New Community Movement (Saemaul Undong) is "a popular, self-help, and socio-economic reform movement initiated voluntarily by the people in the 1970's with the ultimate goal of modernization and peaceful unification of the country."[2] The primary objective of the Movement has been to increase farmers' incomes through the introduction of more modern techniques and the development of sources of income besides crop cultivation (such as, for example, livestock farming and local industries). In addition, great emphasis has been placed on the improvement of rural living conditions (including projects for the construction and expansion of rural roads, replacement of straw roofs with tile or slate, installation of water supply systems and communal wells, construction or repair of river banks and sewage systems, improvement of rural kitchens and toilet facilities, local reforestation, and the introduction of locally-generated methane gas supplies) and "public spiritual ethos reform" to teach the value of self-help and local cooperation.[3]

Despite pronouncements of government officials to the contrary, one unmistakeable impression gained from an examination of the abundance of organization charts, administrative directives, and budget drafts emanating from the national New Community Movement Coordinating Committee is that the Movement is not a locally-initiated and locally-directed project at all, but rather a nationally-conceived and nationally-controlled effort. Saemaul divisions, bureaus, and sections have been grafted onto the bureaucratic structures at all levels in the three organizations we have already discussed, and at least

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[1] Kang, pp. 332-341.

[2] Ministry of Home Affairs, op.cit., p. 108.

[3] Ibid., pp. 108-109.

during the summer of 1973, the word Saemaul was not only on the tips of all government officials' tongues, but also adorned cigarette packages, tearoom signs, movie theater facades, and consumer product brand names.

The Saemaul program divides villages into three categories based on pre-existing levels of development.[1] At the top are the "Self-Reliant Villages," (N=2100), which prior to 1971 had already achieved most of the basic aims of the Movement and are now involved in refinements to their relatively high development level. At the next lower level, "Self-Help Villages" (N=14,500) are involved in most of the projects listed above and rely to a limited extent on supplementary governmental assistance, which in part has taken the form of 300 bags of cement and one-half ton of steel bars. At the lowest level, the "Basic Villages" (N=18,500) engage in "required" and "recommended" projects (the former involving widening of roads, dike construction, sanitation facilities, and common laundering facilities; the latter, construction of certain public welfare facilities and other "income-enhancing" projects), with basic governmental assistance coming in the form of 500 bags of cement and one ton of steel bars per village. Villagers are expected to organize their own Saemaul plans, hold community meetings to discuss the plans, and donate generously of their time in implementing these plans. In reality, at each stage of the planning and implementation process, generous doses of local official 'support' and 'advice' are rendered to ensure fulfillment of developmental goals congruent with higher-level expectations.

The Movement was begun in earnest on a national scale in 1971 after an initial experimental period with several model villages. It received a financial boost only very recently when the Japanese government announced that its next annual aid package to the South Korean government would include a significant allotment of funds for the financing of rural development projects associated with the New Community Movement.[2] (One additional aspect of the program that should be mentioned is that urban areas as well as rural villages are participating in the Movement and are involved in urban renewal and development projects.)

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[1] Saemaul Undong Chungang Hyŏp Oehoe, 73 Saemaul Undong Chonghap Jichim, p. 5.

[2] Yomiuri Shimbun, November 3, 1973.

Although Saemaul permeates the Korean developmental air these days, the South Korean government also has a more general program designed to upgrade agricultural production and improve rural incomes. For 1972, the first year of the Third Five-Year Economic Development Plan, the following policy objectives were to be implemented:

> "1) Epochal increases in the production of the Tongil high yield variety of rice, barley, wheat, soybeans and sesame seeds in order to lay the groundwork for a green revolution.
> 2) Steady promotion of the consumption of mixed diets of rice and other cereals as well as foods prepared from wheat flour as a means of improving nutrition while conserving rice.
> 3) Implementation of a second phase of the special program to increase rural income.
> 4) Comprehensive development of the basins of the Han, Nakdong, Kum, and Youngsan rivers.
> 5) Vigorous pursuit of farm mechanization.
> 6) Large-scale reclamation of uplands.
> 7) Development of 'new villages' around model farmers as the nuclei."[1]

More generally, the government is involved in the following policies for agricultural development: development of agricultural water resources, farmland repatterning, improvement of fertilizer and pesticide application, development of the livestock industry, increased production of cash crops, increased sericultural productivity, development of fisheries and forests, improved marketing systems, export promotion and import discouragement, utilization of seasonally-idled rural labor, and promotion of school-industry cooperation.

The next section will take up the question of how successful these government policies have been in promoting rural development.

F. The Agricultural Sector in the Korean Economy, 1962-71

During the 1960's, the agricultural sector continued to decline in relative importance in its contribution to the Gross National Product of South Korea (see Table 6). In terms of growth rates, the average annual rate for

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[1] Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Agriculture in Korea, 1972, p. 29.

agriculture during this period was 3.86%, as contrasted with 17.24% for mining and manufacturing and 9.15% for the economy as a whole (see Table 7). The percentage of the total population living on farms declined by almost 11 points, and the average number of persons per farm household also dropped, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Farm Population and Size of Farm Household

	% Farm Population of Total Population	Farm Population per Household
1962	57.1	6.11
1963	56.2	6.33
1964	55.6	6.35
1965	55.2	6.31
1966	54.0	6.21
1967	53.5	6.22
1968	51.7	6.17
1969	49.6	6.12
1970	45.9	5.80
1971	46.2	5.93

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, p. 27.

A chronic problem of the agricultural sector has been its continuing failure to meet the demand for basic food grains from domestic production alone, necessitating a reliance on food imports.[1] The total amount of rice production jumped from between 2½ and 3 million metric tons in the late 1950's to between 3½ and 4 million metric

[1] In recent years, South Korea has been importing up to one-fifth of its yearly supply of foodgrains. See Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, p. 335.

Table 6: Composition of GNP by Industrial Group, 1962-71, in Percent (at 1970 Constant Market Prices)

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Agricultural, forestry, and fishery	40.3	40.0	42.6	39.4	38.9	34.3	31.1	30.5	28.0	26.5
Mining and manufacturing	13.3	14.1	13.8	15.5	15.9	18.1	20.0	20.8	22.8	24.4
Social overhead capital (1)	6.7	7.2	7.6	8.5	9.1	10.0	11.7	13.1	13.3	13.0
Other services	39.7	38.7	36.0	36.6	36.1	37.6	37.2	35.6	35.9	36.1

(1) Includes construction, transportation, storage, communication, electricity, water, and sanitary service.

Source: The Bank of Korea, Economic Statistics Yearbook, 1973, pp. 298-299.

Table 7: Major Indicators on GNP

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Growth Rate of GNP (1)	3.1	8.8	8.6	6.1	12.4	7.8	12.6	15.0	7.9	9.2
Growth Rate of per capita GNP (1)	0.2	5.8	5.6	3.3	9.6	5.3	10.1	13.9	6.0	7.4
Growth Rate by industry										
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	-5.8	8.1	15.1	-1.9	10.8	-5.0	2.4	12.5	-0.9	3.3
Mining and manufacturing	14.1	15.7	6.9	18.7	15.6	21.6	24.8	19.9	18.2	16.9
Other sectors	8.9	7.4	3.0	9.9	12.6	13.8	15.4	14.6	8.9	8.9

(1) Series at 1970 constant market prices.

Source: The Bank of Korea, National Income Statistics Yearbook, 1972, pp. 176-177.

tons in the late 1960's.[1] Government programs to introduce new high-yielding varieties, to increase the application of chemical fertilizer and other production-enhancing inputs, to reclaim additional land, and other measures no doubt contributed to this overall increase in production. But when population growth is taken into account, much of the apparent progress is vitiated. As Table 8 indicates, per capita rice production in 1970 was below that of 1955. In the same period, overall agricultural production increased on a per capita basis by a little over 6%, but even here, 1966 was a better year than 1970. During the fifteen-year period, population pressures on the land contributed to a decreasing per capita area of land devoted to rice cultivation.

Significant advances have been made in the production of a number of cash crops, dairy products, and silkworms, and this in turn has helped to increase incomes of rural households. Some overall production trends are shown in Table 9. Less impressive has been the effort to increase productivity in terms of yields per unit of land. As seen from Table 10, progress for most major crops has been halting at best. Furthermore, several monetary indicators of agricultural productivity show that the gains have been uneven, with some improvement in labor productivity but little or no change in land productivity and little change in capital intensity for agricultural (Table 11). Table 12 summarizes some basic trends of production assets which further strengthen the conclusion that despite substantial new inputs of power tillers, fertilizer, insecticides, and pumps over the past decade, the gains for rice production and other basic grains have been basically unimpressive.

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[1]For source, see Table 8.

Table 8: Per Capita Rice and Total Agricultural Production and Per Capita Planted Area for Rice, 1955-70

	P/C Rice Production (metric tons)	P/C Total Agricultural Production (mt)	P/C Planted Area in Rice (hectares)
1955	.137	.224	.051
1960	.122	.211	.045
1966	.134	.259	.043
1970	.125	.238	.039

Source: Computed from Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, Korea Statistical Yearbook, 1972, p. 40 and Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, p. 134.

Table 9: Index Number of Agricultural and Forestry Production (1964-66=100)

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Rice	79.5	99.1	104.3	92.3	103.4	95.0	84.3	107.9	103.9	101.3
Barley	81.6	61.9	95.2	101.1	103.7	99.0	89.4	97.4	87.1	78.9
Soybeans	93.7	94.1	98.0	105.0	97.0	121.2	147.6	137.8	139.6	133.8
Fruits and vegetables	67.9	66.6	89.7	90.3	120.0	127.9	155.9	134.0	125.6	156.2
Livestock	88.8	106.0	111.4	93.0	95.6	101.9	93.2	130.5	126.7	116.6
Milk	19.6	44.7	71.8	108.6	119.5	196.6	248.9	363.3	531.5	669.0
Cocoons	71.3	79.7	75.7	100.4	124.1	140.9	214.8	267.6	276.6	319.1
Timber	59.4	80.6	84.2	85.9	129.9	135.0	139.2	186.8	142.1	149.1
Mushrooms	134.8	118.1	120.9	81.3	97.8	115.0	205.7	236.7	289.1	268.6

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, pp. 432-437.

Table 10: Agricultural Production (Yields in kg Per Hectare)

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Rice	2652	3257	3307	2853	3186	2914	2773	3358	3277	3358
Barley,	1684	1109	1674	1775	2087	1976	2128	2218	2188	2228
Soybeans	544	555	575	565	585	645	786	746	786	807
Fruits	8500	7562	8066	7290	7391	7522	7724	7542	7088	7371
Vegetables	10577	9912	10406	10547	11232	10638	11253	10819	9992	11434

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, pp. 134-135, 180, 224, 226. Figures have been converted from Korean units.

G. Rural Income and Welfare

According to South Korea's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, farm income per household "has grown 2.5 times between 1965 and 1970,"[1] but the figures used by the Ministry in their calculation failed to reflect increased living costs brought about through inflation. When adjusted for rising price levels, a very different picture emerges, as shown in Figure 3. The real gain between 1960 and 1971 was 45.5%, with considerable fluctuation in the intervening years. Only in the past few years has the curve consistently gone upward, but it is difficult to project whether this trend will continue.

The ratio of rural-to-urban income for the average household in the respective sectors was 99.7% in 1965 but fell to 60.1% only two years later.[2] In the years since 1967, this gap has narrowed somewhat as farmers received higher prices for their production, but the urban areas still contain the prospect of a higher income and better living conditions for the average rural inhabitant. In 1971, rural households were paying about 6% more out of their overall consumption expenditures for food purchases than urban households, although somewhat lesser shares for housing and clothing (Table 13).

Perhaps the largest single constraint on rural incomes has been the average size of land holdings. Although there is at present a tendency away from the smallest family holdings, as marginal farmers move to the urban areas, the bulk of the farmland under cultivation is still farmed by households owning a hectare or less of land. In 1971, almost one-third of all farm households held plots less than 0.5 hectare in area; another third held between 0.5 and 1.0 hectare; and only six percent held more than 2.0 hectares. In the same year, the average income per farm household for those holding less than 0.5 hectare was ₩240,481 (approximately U.S. $650 at the June 1971 exchange rate); for those holding between 0.5 and 1.0 hectare, ₩350,891 (U.S. $948); and proportionately higher incomes for households holding more than 1.0 hectare.[3] Of course, households with larger land holdings usually have more people per household and this somewhat offsets the lower income figures. The fact remains, however, that the extremely small plots cultivated by two-thirds of all rural households severely limit the income-enhancing capacity of these people.

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[1] Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Agriculture in Korea, 1972, p. 16.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry in Korea, 1972, pp. 48-49, 292-295.

Table 11: Indicators of Agricultural Productivity
(in 1970 constant prices)

	Land Productivity (1)	% Change	Labor Productivity (2)	% Change	Capital Intensity (3)	% Change
1962	₩19089/tanbo		₩ 66.98/hr.		₩32013/tanbo	
1963	₩24173	+26.6%	₩104.42	+55.9%	₩37960	+18.6%
1964	₩25475	+ 5.4%	₩109.41	+ 4.8%	₩25220	-33.6%
1965	₩17878	-29.8%	₩ 82.17	-24.9%	₩16070	-36.3%
1966	₩18416	+ 3.0%	₩ 84.58	+ 2.9%	₩22972	+42.9%
1967	₩18137	- 1.5%	₩ 87.72	+ 3.7%	₩22835	- 0.6%
1968	₩17395	+ 4.1%	₩ 92.28	+ 5.2%	₩23102	+ 1.2%
1969	₩19332	+11.1%	₩104.43	+13.2%	₩26229	+13.5%
1970	₩19639	+ 1.6%	₩107.18	+ 2.6%	₩26394	+ 0.6%
1971	₩25644	+30.6%	₩139.18	+29.9%	₩31638	+19.9%

(1) Agricultural income per household/Area of cultivated land per household.

(2) Labor hours of farming per household/Agricultural income per household.

(3) Agricultural capital per household/Area of cultivated land per household.

Source: Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, Korea Statistical Yearbook, 1972, pp. 144-145 (based on retail price index numbers of all farm supplies, household goods, wages, and charges, from Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, pp. 444-455).

One Tanbo = .099 Hectare

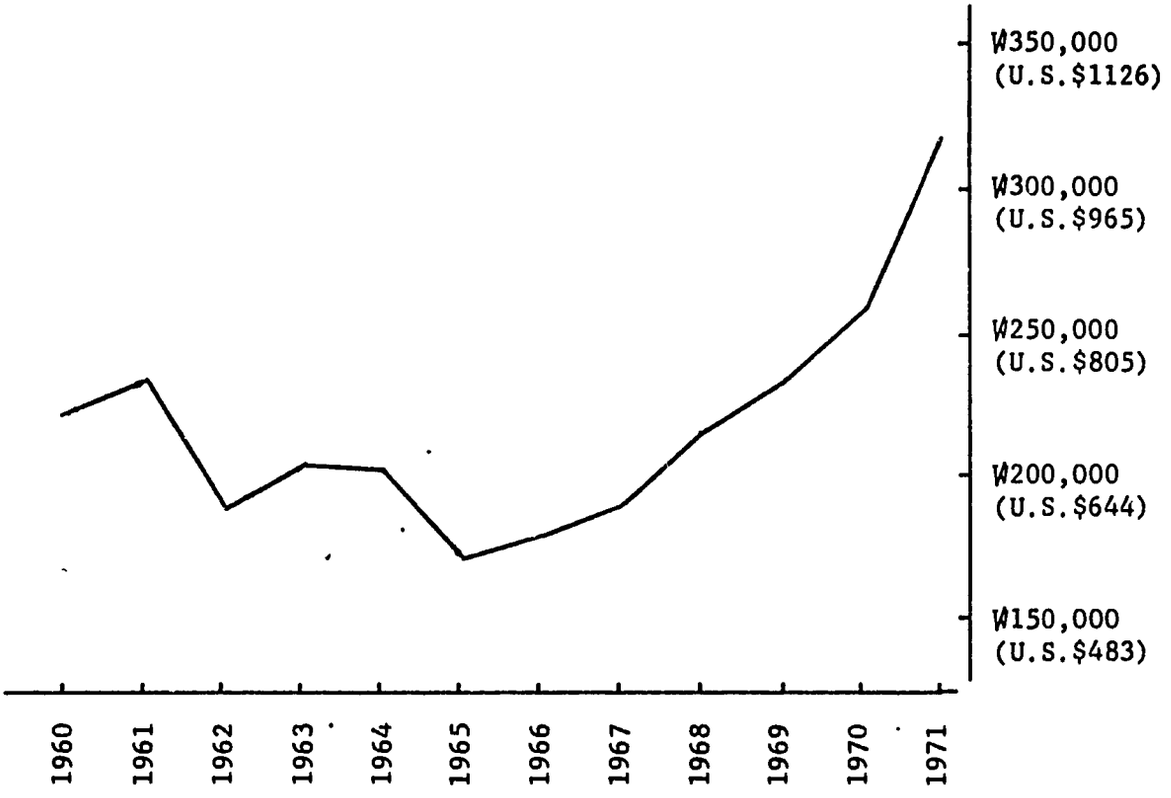
U.S. $1.00 = ₩310.75 (June 1970 exchange rate, from Korea Statistical Yearbook, 1972, p. 407).

Table 12: Index Numbers of Productive Basis and Trends of Assets of Agriculture (1965=100)

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Farm household	98.5	96.4	97.7	100.0	101.3	103.2	102.9	101.6	99.2	99.0
Farm population	95.5	96.6	98.3	100.0	99.8	101.7	100.6	98.6	91.3	93.0
Farm pop. per household	96.8	100.3	100.6	100.0	98.4	98.4	97.8	97.0	91.9	94.0
Cultivated, land-paddy area	96.5	99.2	100.4	100.0	98.8	97.3	97.5	98.3	93.6	99.4
Cultivated land-upland	87.8	91.0	95.9	100.0	102.3	102.1	103.3	104.4	95.6	104.9
Fertilizer consumption	15.2	88.2	92.6	100.0	107.7	123.8	121.7	136.0	143.2	153.9
Power tillers	13.3	40.5	58.8	100.0	139.9	346.8	560.3	795.0	1069.7	1515.9
Hand-power insect spray	55.1	83.6	94.2	100.0	489.2	136.3	201.0	299.9	382.1	492.7
Power-driven pumps	56.7	56.0	59.0	100.0	115.0	121.5	145.2	190.3	207.8	222.4

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, pp. 424-429.

Figure 3: Annual Average Farm Household Income, 1960-1971 (1970 constant prices)*



*Dollar amounts are based on June 1970 exchange rate. For source, see Table 11.

Source: Computed from Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, Korea Statistical Yearbook, 1972, pp. 147 and 248, and Research Department of the Bank of Korea, Economic Statistics Yearbook, 1963, p. 276. Times series price indexes for the 1960-71 period are based on wholesale prices for major commodity groups. Consistent time series indexes for retail prices paid by farmers were not available for the entire period. However, recomputation using some of the available retail indexes revealed no major deviation from the trend indicated above.

Table 13: Consumption Expenditures Per Household By Spending Categories (percentage)

By Year	Food	Housing	Fuel	Clothing	Misc.
		Farm Households			
1965	53.1%	3.8%	7.8%	8.0%	27.2%
1966	50.2	4.1	8.3	8.7	28.9
1967	49.1	4.0	8.0	9.0	30.0
1968	47.4	4.9	8.2	9.0	30.6
1969	46.4	4.3	8.1	9.0	32.1
1970	45.9	4.2	7.9	8.4	33.6
1971	47.4	4.2	8.0	7.6	32.8
		Urban Households			
1965	56.7	13.8	5.8	6.4	17.2
1966	48.5	17.9	6.2	7.7	19.6
1967	44.5	18.3	5.8	10.2	21.1
1968	42.4	17.2	5.2	10.8	24.4
1969	40.9	18.5	5.1	10.7	24.7
1970	40.5	18.4	5.5	10.1	25.6
1971	41.0	18.8	5.4	9.4	25.3

Source: Republic of Korea, Economic Statistics Yearbook, 1973, pp. 250-251.

In the area of farm management, the ratio of agricultural expenditures to agricultural receipts for all farm households has held relatively constant during a recent six-year period for which figures were available (Table 14). Prices received by farmers for rice improved considerably after 1968, while those for barley and wheat fluctuated greatly in the early 1960's before making strong gains in the late sixties (Table 15). The greatest price advances were registered for cash crops after 1969. The price index for vegetables rose from 49.3 to 100.0 (the base accounting year) in 1969-70. Given a trend among Korean farmers to devote increasing acreage and effort to cash-crop production, this sector of agricultural production would seem to hold the greatest prospect of enhancing rural incomes for the immediate future. Such concentration of energies in cash-cropping, however, will continue to exacerbate the continuing shortage of basic food grains.

Table 14: Income and Expenditures per Farm Household

	A. Agricultural Receipts	B. Agricultural Expenditures	B/A
1966	131407	29977	22.8%
1967	150995	34636	22.9%
1968	177083	40147	22.7%
1969	214617	47489	22.1%
1970	248064	54027	21.8%
1971	356567	64658	18.8%

Source: Republic of Korea, Economic Planning Board, Korea Statistical Yearbook, 1972, pp. 158-159.

Table 15 also shows that prices paid by farmers for clothing rose considerably faster than prices received by farmers for rice in the mid-1960's. The same held true for such other household necessities as building materials and fuel for heating and lighting. Only after 1969 did prices received by farmers for food grains and cash crops recover sufficiently to offset rising prices for household goods. Whether this trend will continue is difficult to project, but a government commitment to hold down food prices for

Table 15: Index Numbers of Prices Received and Paid by Farmers (1970=100)

	Prices Received for			Prices Paid For		
	Rice	Barley & Wheat	Vegetables	Clothing	Housing Materials	Light & Fuel
1964	57.0	84.3	33.2	57.9	49.2	49.8
1965	53.5	61.4	40.1	66.1	53.6	57.4
1966	56.5	58.1	51.0	77.0	67.4	69.2
1967	62.2	69.5	43.2	85.7	75.5	81.9
1968	73.2	75.9	43.9	91.2	83.0	85.9
1969	90.8	89.3	49.3	95.5	88.9	90.9
1970	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1971	125.6	136.2	96.3	102.3	112.4	108.7

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, pp. 444-447.

Table 16: Farm Households in Chungcheong Nam Do, According to Percentage of Rented Land in Total Cultivated Area, 1970

	No. of Households	% of Total
Private Farm Households	306,418	
Without Cultivated Land	7,904	2.6%
Without any Rented Land	204,314	66.7%
Less than 10%	34,050	11.1%
10%-20%	10,268	3.4%
20%-30%	10,477	3.4%
30%-40%	8,998	2.9%
40%-50%	7,504	2.4%
50%-60%	7,199	2.3%
60%-70%	5,640	1.8%
70%-80%	4,673	1.5%
80%-90%	3,573	1.2%
More than 90%	1,818	0.6%

Source: Republic of Korea, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Agricultural Census, 1970, No. 5 (Chungcheong Nam Do), pp. 196-197.

urban workers, coupled with an inability to cope with a worldwide inflationary spiral for petroleum-derived and other products, could spell increasing financial difficulties for Korean farmers.

While severe income restraints still persist in the South Korean countryside, at least most farmers are not subject to the burden of paying extravagant rents to absentee landlords as they were in the days before World War II. The land reform seems to have had a major impact on reducing tenancy permanently. While accurate national statistics are not readily available and while some would argue that the tenancy figures are actually higher than official government census figures indicate, in one province, at least, the percentage of farm households renting 10% or more of their land is reported to be only 19.5%. Of these, the great bulk are renting less than 50% of the land they cultivate. 66.7% of the households are reported to rent no land at all (see Table 16).

Great strides have been made in providing at least primary school facilities in rural areas, but access to middle and high schools is often impeded by school fees that are beyond the reach of many rural households or by the necessity of having children remain employed on the farm after graduation from primary school. In 1971 there were 115 agricultural high schools with almost 40,000 students. Roughly 30% of the graduates from these schools eventually return to farming.[1]

Most county seats now have public health centers which provide such services as tuberculosis clinics and vaccinations, but many townships are still without the services of a physician. In 1971, 36.3% of the townships (containing 27.3% of South Korea's total population) did not have a physician; 90.4% did not have dentists, and 72.2% lacked herb-doctors.[2]

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[1]Korean Agricultural Sector Study Team 1972 (George E. Rossmiller, Field Project Director and Glenn L. Johnson, Project Director), Korean Agricultural Sector Analysis and Recommended Development Strategies, 1971-1985 (hereafter referred to as KASS) (Seoul, Korea and East Lansing, Michigan, 1973), pp. 27-28.

[2]Republic of Korea, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Yearbook of Public Health and Social Statistics, 1971, pp. 178-179.

Nutrition levels have improved somewhat in recent years, but in the more isolated areas food supplies are sometimes meager and fresh vegetables and fruits often a luxury. Cereals comprise about half of the total food intake of the average Korean (compared to 25% in Japan and 8.4% in the United States). Daily per capita caloric intake has risen from 2090 calories in 1962 to 2468 calories in 1969, an increase of 18%.[1] The government has repeatedly tried to alter the food consumption patterns of its citizens by first urging restaurants, and later forcing them, to substitute other grains for rice on certain days of the week. But, not surprisingly, most people have been reluctant to switch from rice to other cereals, and perhaps only the price mechanism can eventually change eating habits.

Radios, television sets, and movie theaters have introduced a partial means of escape from the daily drudgery of farm labor throughout the countryside. The number of television antennas that now dot the rural landscape is surprisingly high in areas that are electrified, but by 1970 only 1.2% of rural villages were fully electrified and only 11.8% were more than half electrified.[2] It is usually the most isolated areas that have least access to various forms of "electronic" recreation.

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[1] Agriculture in Korea, 1972, p. 12. In 1971, rural daily per capita caloric intake exceeded urban per capita caloric intake, 2630 to 2534. See KASS, p. 59.

[2] KASS, p. 29.

PART II:

MICRO-LEVEL ANALYSIS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH KOREA

A. Introduction to Part II

Having outlined the basic components of South Korea's rural administrative network and mapped out very briefly the productivity, income, and social welfare aspects of rural development over the past decade, this next part of the study will present a micro-level examination of local government and rural development in two specific counties in South Korea.

These two areas were visited by the author and a field assistant in the summer of 1973. The first area ("County A") is regarded as a rather prosperous agricultural district while the second ("County B") is much less so. Both areas were selected on the basis of our previous familiarity with them and so the choice was not entirely random. However, some attention was given to the desirability of comparing counties situated in different provinces, with as many contrasting geographical features as would be possible in a small nation with relatively uniform topographical characteristics. These criteria were largely met in the two counties we visited. Because of the time limitation placed upon our field research, we cannot prove the representativeness of the observations made nor can we claim that the conclusions reached necessarily apply for the country as a whole. But Korean administrative practices are generally regarded as remarkably uniform from region to region, and this observation should temper a too-hasty inference that a two-case study cannot have implications for the operation of the broader system within which the two cases function.

Although we did not attempt to structure our interviews with local officials and farmers too rigidly, the following types of questions guided our research:

1. What alternate channels do South Korean farmers have open to them to participate meaningfully in the conduct of local public affairs, given the fact that at present there are no local-level elections above the hamlet level and no local public decision-making bodies selected from below?

2. How do local officials go about gauging public opinion on local issues in the absence of significant voluntary associations that in other countries might aggregate and articulate collective interests?

3. In a system that has often been characterized as being highly-centralized and bureaucratically top-heavy, how does the central government respond to local needs and evaluate centrally-conceived but locally-administered projects?

4. To what extent and in what manner do local officials comply with policy directives emanating from the central government?

5. What types of problems can be treated strictly at the local level, without excessive central interference?

6. What has been the impact of the New Community Movement and other government projects on the overall level of development in South Korea's rural areas, and how do local officials and individual farmers react to these programs?

7. How do local administrators conduct the day-to-day routines of their office, and what is the nature and extent of inter-agency cooperation and coordination at the local level?

8. In general, what has been the role of local public institutions in promoting rural development?

We pursued these and other related questions by first conducting interviews with county-level officials in the three main organizations described earlier. From the county, we "descended" to the next lower administrative tier, the township, and from there visited the neighborhood association (hamlet) where we talked both with the local leader and individual farmers.

B. The Areas Visited

County A is situated on Korea's west coast in a relatively isolated area, approximately four hours' travel from Seoul and five hours from the provincial capital by train and bus. There is no direct rail link to the area, and in June 1973, the road connecting the county seat with the nearest rail facility was unpaved. County B is located southeast of County A in a neighboring province, and is inland. Its county seat is linked to the "outside world" by an excellent recently-constructed asphalt highway, and is only a forty-five minute drive from its provincial capital. Some basic demographic data comparing the two counties are given in Table 17.

Table 17: Demographic Data for Areas Visited in Field Research (all figures are for 1971)

	County A	County B	National
Area (k^2)	997.0	621.0	
Population	260,787.0	107,282.0	
Population engaged in agriculture	219,037.0	84,283.0	
% Agr. of total population	84.0%	79.0%	
No. of farm households	35,250.0	15,690.0	
Farm pop./households	6.2	6.0	5.93
Pop. density (km^2)	262.0	173.0	320.00
Area of cultivated land:			
Paddy (%)	52.6%	55.3%	55.70%
Upland (%)	47.4%	44.7%	44.30%
Land area/farm household (in hectare)	1.02	.78	.92

Source: Statistical yearbooks of respective counties for 1972.

County B, with a considerably lower population density than County A, has an average farm size per household well below the national average, while County A's average farm size is somewhat higher than the national figure. This is partly attributable to the fact that a larger portion of County B's total land area is forested (68.6% compared with 59.8% for County A) and is quite rugged, while County A has considerable flatlands and tidal areas.

Both counties are primarily engaged in grain production, although both are currently trying to stimulate sericulture and cash crop production through government-sponsored programs. Rice yields, as only one example of agricultural productivity, are nearly identical, with County A having 3348 kg./hectare and County B, 3358 kg./hectare in 1971 (the national average was also 3358 kg./hectare for that year). Yields of other major crops are also very similar.[1]

[1] Yearbook of Agriculture and Forestry Statistics, 1972, p. 138.

Table 18 shows the distribution of farm households by size of holding for Counties A and B for 1971:

Table 18: Number of Farm Households by Size of Farm: Land Under Cultivation, 1971 (in percentage)*

	-0.5 ha	0.5 to 1.0 ha	1.0 to 1.5 ha	1.5 to 2.0 ha	+2.0 ha
County A	25.4%	33.2%	21.8%	9.9%	7.7%
County B	36.5%	36.1%	17.1%	6.2%	2.9%

*Rows do not add up to 100% because of incomplete data.

Source: Statistical Yearbooks of respective counties for 1972.

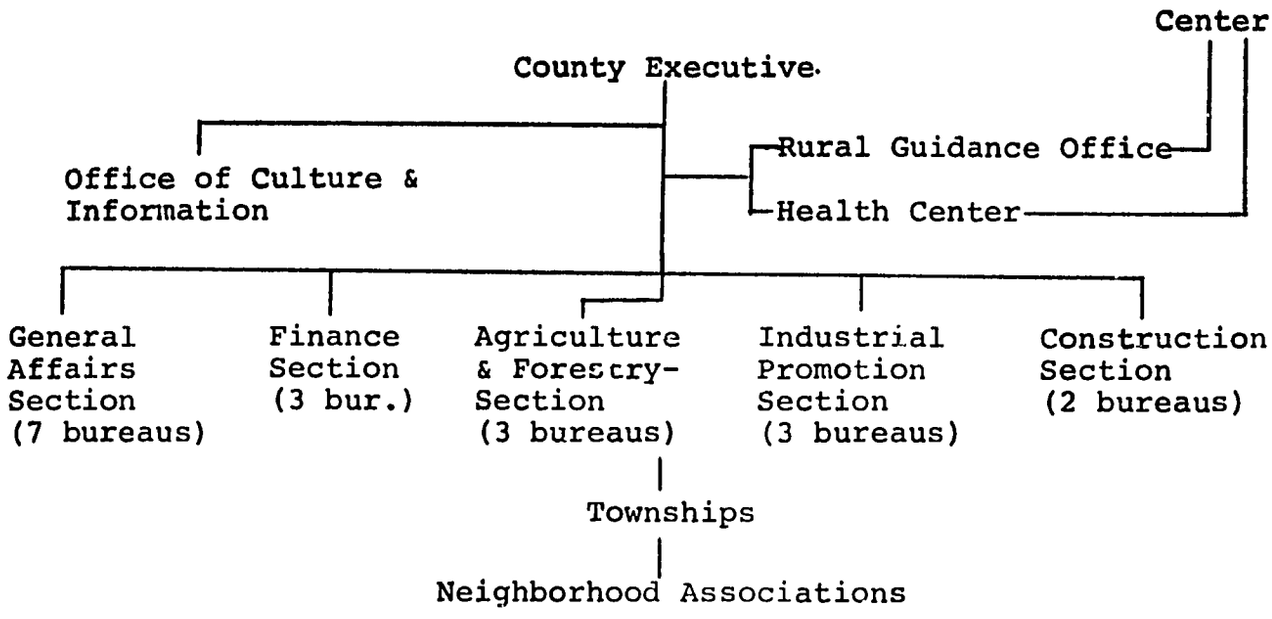
Holdings of less than half a hectare are usually considered near or below subsistence-level while farms larger than two hectares in area are relatively large by Korean standards. In both counties surveyed, half or more of all farm households were living very close to the subsistence level, with County B clearly the poorer of the two. While there is always some question as to the accuracy of these official statistics because of the tendency to conceal hidden holdings that stand in violation of the three hectare limit for maximum farm size,[1] the figures generally conform to the overall national pattern of land holdings. Even by the most optimistic accounts, the small size of farm holdings is a major constraint on household incomes in these two counties.

C. County Government

Structure: The county functions as the "local autonomous body." As such it is the pivotal coordinating structure between the central ministries and the lowest levels of government. It is mainly involved in transmitting instructions from higher (provincial and central) to lower (township) administrative tiers, in overseeing local projects, and in reporting results from lower to higher levels. The organizational structures of both counties surveyed were identical, as shown in Figure 4:

[1]This limit is now under revision.

Figure 4: County Organizational Structure



Source: Statistical yearbooks of respective counties for 1972.

While the county executive exercises de jure supervision and control over Rural Guidance Office and Health Ce ter activities, these agencies are linked vertically to separate national organizations as well.

Personnel: All employees of the county government office, from the county executive down to the lowest-ranking clerk, are appointed either directly by the county executive or by higher bureaucratic levels, depending on the grade of the position. Appointments are based in part on competitive examinations, but personal influence with key county, provincial, or even national officials can also be a determining factor. The volatility of the higher-ranking positions such as county executive and section chief in the county government is demonstrated by the turnover rate for these positions: the average tenure for the executive in County A over a fifteen-year period was 19.4 months; that for the County B executive, 17.4 months for a sixteen-year period.[1] Even

[1]From 1972 statistical yearbooks of the two counties.

shorter periods were recorded for section chiefs in the two counties. Such short tenure in one location does not reflect removal for malfeasance or incompetence so much as a long-standing Korean administrative practice of constantly shifting key officials around (almost always within the same general district) to prevent their accumulating substantial political or economic capital in any one area. The result of this transfer process seems to have been a kind of "mediocratization" of elite leadership at the county level: officials set their sights on 'moving up' to larger counties or even to provincial positions as quickly as possible, and thus focus their attention on highly-visible, low-risk projects. Rarely do they adopt the position of county lobbyist as local officials in the United States are often prone to do; rather, they serve as protagonists of national and provincial policies so as not to incur the disfavor of those above them who are in a position to affect their careers. Skillful administrators move on to higher levels, leaving the less competent ones 'behind.'

One structural feature of organizational life in Korea that facilitates frequent transfer, whether the organization be the post office department, the school system, a private bank, or a public office, is the homogeneity of organizational arrangements at any given level throughout the system. Thus, a county executive has no need to concern himself with readjusting to a completely unfamiliar accounting system or planning mechanism as he moves from location to location: papers are shuffled in very similar ways throughout the countryside.

The county officials that I met were usually natives of the same province, and frequently of the same district to which they were presently assigned. Bureau and section chiefs tended to be in their forties and early fifties, while clerks and messengers were of course much younger. The two chief executives were both in their early fifties.

Despite the fact that County A had more than twice the population of County B, the total number of persons employed in the two county offices was almost the same.[1] Different mixes of national/local civil servants could be observed, however. Many newly-appointed officials are now being sent to provincial training centers to enhance

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[1] Ibid.

their administrative skills. The major universities, especially the Seoul National University School of Public Administration, have produced large numbers of graduates trained in the basic principles of public administration, but few of these seem to have filtered down to the county level or below. Most officials that I met had not advanced beyond high school or technical school, and none had graduated from a specialized college of public administration.

Planning and Finance: Counties are responsible for drafting annual budgets and submitting them to the provincial governor for approval, but the process is not one in which any degree of initiative is taken by the counties. County officials must not only incorporate "handed down" project plans from higher levels into their own budgets, but must also carefully consider the financial constraints imposed by scarce local tax resources and by a very high degree of dependence on central subsidies and grants-in-aid that are usually earmarked for specific purposes. In the narrow range of policy-making where county officials possess a limited degree of autonomy in designating "special projects," the mechanisms for reaching a decision may vary slightly from county to county depending on the particular style of the county executive; however, the process described by the two county executives I interviewed was probably relatively typical of a more general decision-making style.

Key elements in the planning process are frequent meetings between high-ranking county officials and other county leaders, a constant barrage of communications from the provincial capital, and numerous trips to the provincial government seat to receive briefings and directives. In County A, the county executive organized a monthly conference of county leaders (composed of the top educational officials, court officials, the police, section chiefs of the county government, agricultural cooperative officials, and retired military officers). There suggestions for future projects were solicited and reports on past progress reviewed. In this same county, the county executive relied to some extent on reports and petitions from township officials and on personal inspection tours of projects in progress to determine what the future needs of an area might be. In County B, the executive held a meeting of the highest county government officials almost daily to receive reports and issue instructions. On the basis of these intensive contacts as well as directives received from the provincial governor's office, plans were formulated and discussed.

The method of arriving at decisions once proposals have been put on the table is quite familiar to students of decision-making styles in Japanese and Korean organizations: an item is first talked to death, with almost everyone participating in the discussion, until the leader has a sense that there is general agreement on what the decisional outcome should be. Usually an attempt is made from the beginning to narrow the range of alternatives to only one, and that one is usually the choice most desired by the influential members of the group. Since there is almost always a 'consensus' on the desired outcome, formal voting rarely occurs and there is no dissent from the decision.

Both county executives we interviewed indicated that 90% or more of the plans for future projects and activities were "handed-down," and less than ten percent consisted of locally-initiated "special projects." In County B, we were informed that at least one of three special local projects under consideration, the development of a lake area, had been recognized as a problem requiring governmental action more than twenty years ago, but that continual shortages of funds had made execution of the plan an impossibility thus far. Officials added that the regular budget did not even provide sufficient funds to execute satisfactorily the 90% of the projects that had been "handed-down."

Examination of settled accounts for the two counties for 1972 reveals an extreme degree of dependence on non-local revenues for financial support (Table 19):

Table 19: Summary of Settled Accounts, 1972 (in percent)

	All Counties	County A	County B
Revenues			
Local Tax Resources	11.5%	15.8%	6.9%
Non-tax Revenues	7.8	7.9	8.6
Revenue-sharing	47.7	42.3	54.3
Subsidy	33.0	34.0	30.2
Expenditures			
Administrative	38.1%	41.9%	40.5%
Public Utilities	24.8	17.9	25.1
Industry/Economic	27.7	32.3	25.5
Social Welfare	7.7	7.7	8.8
Other	1.7	0.2	0.1

Source: Budgets of respective counties for 1972.

On the expenditure side, both counties adhered rather closely to the national average for all counties with about two-fifths of the money spent going directly to administrative expenses, usually salaries. Projects for industrial and agricultural improvement/promotion received one-fourth to one-third of the allocated funds. Social welfare expenditures were relatively inconsequential.

There has been a slight change in emphasis over the past few years from expenditures for capital projects geared largely to improving the local infrastructure to capital investments designed to enhance local production through the introduction of new special crops or small manufacturing enterprises.

Developmental activities: Almost all ongoing activities that relate to rural development at the local level are channeled through and administered by the county government. At times the county officials may assume the role of supervisor or "watch dog" over other local agencies (i.e., if the county cooperative is engaged in a crop diversification scheme or the Rural Guidance Office launches a pest control program). At other times the direct expenditure of county funds and constant direction by county officials may be involved.

County B, for example, offered the following classification of its major activities for 1973:[1]

1. Strengthening the October Spirit of Revitalization proclaimed by President Park.
2. The New Community Movement.
3. Income Enhancement Projects.
4. Regional Development Projects.
5. Military Administration.

The projects for the New Community Movement included very specific and detailed plans for instructing the farmers in how to attain a more "scientific spirit" concerning cultivation; for establishing 'private' money clubs in the villages that would in effect replace the centuries-old collective aid societies; for roof, road, river, stream, ditch, and dike improvements; and for facilities to improve rural sanitation. Among the "income enhancement projects" were plans to introduce sericulture to more households; breeding of "Korean" cows; planting chestnut

[1] From 1973 budget draft of County B.

trees, ginsaeng, medicinal herbs and roots, and other cash crops; stimulating the formation of labor pools for rice planting and harvesting; increasing barley production; and establishing a large-scale forest. Regional development projects included the financing of certain social welfare projects, lake development, electrification, improving water supplies, constructing and repairing national highways, and setting up a disaster-relief program.

In addition to these planned projects, the counties receive petitions for special local projects requiring small sums of money (usually transmitted throughout the township office and involving minor infrastructural improvements). In 1972, for example, County A received 108 petitions from township officials, and of these, 48 were eventually approved. Few or no petitions are received directly from individual citizens, although an occasional exception might involve one of the larger farmers in the area. In County B, the county executive reported that he received two or three requests annually from each township he visited on an inspection tour, and of these requests, perhaps ten to twenty percent were approved. Projects involving expenditures of less than ₩500,000 (U.S. $1,250 at June 1973 exchange rate) were handed over entirely to the respective townships for execution, while more expensive projects required county supervision.

Of course, not all plans are executed fully, due to limited financial resources, and some of the "special projects" are no more than "paper plans" drawn up largely to impress visiting provincial and national officials. Some projects <u>are</u> adequately funded, however, and receive considerable attention from higher-level officials who must answer to cabinet ministers and perhaps to the President himself. In the summer of 1973, one such project was the New Community Movement. One interesting indication of the high priority this project was receiving was the fact that County B had two official vehicles at its disposal: one jeep for the county executive and another for the New Community Movement section in the county government.

A typical example of the extent to which the county is more a transmitter of higher-level programs than its own autonomous agent is the description related to us by an official in the Agricultural and Forestry Section of County B, of the process involved in carrying out the county's project to introduce the cultivation of silkworms, ginsaeng, tobacco, and medicinal herbs to the area:

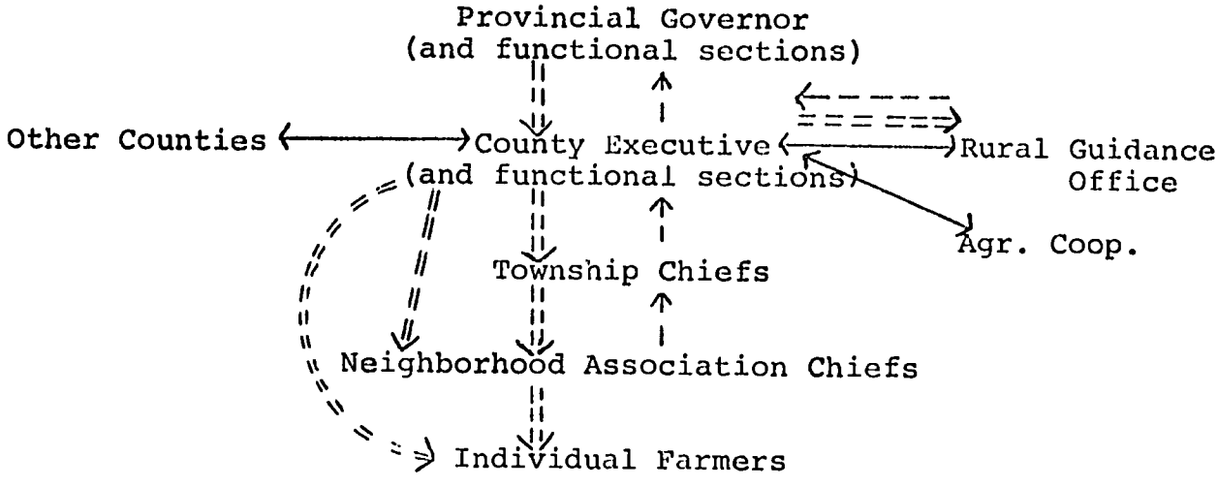
First, the section received from the provincial government "guidance for the selection criteria to be used in choosing project farmers," as well as "guidance on new technology related to special crops." Then the section ordered townships to draft plans for the introduction of special crops and to select farmers to be involved in the project, presumably based upon criteria drawn up at the provincial (national?) level. After township programs had been instituted, the section was responsible for receiving detailed monthly reports on these programs and for personally inspecting project sites to evaluate progress to date. The results of all this reporting and inspecting would then be forwarded to the province for further study.

In another project to control crop pests and diseases, the same section worked closely with the county Rural Guidance Office and the county agricultural cooperative to coordinate the sale of chemicals and the testing of suspect plants, and was responsible for submitting "endless" reports to the province on accomplishments and deficiencies in the program.

The county project summaries issued at year's end are interesting documents in the extent to which they reveal county officials' inclinations to establish project goals that are certain to be fulfilled or, in the case of projects that are especially high-priority items, overfulfilled. As only one example, in 1972 County B reported that it had fulfilled 100% or more of its plan projections for 23 of 29 separate projects, and that, interestingly enough, in two areas that had received special emphasis from the provincial and national levels, the project results had exceeded the original goal by considerable margins. While there are no doubt a number of ways to interpret these results, they certainly seem to confirm the notion that in a highly centralized administrative system where promotion to a higher level position can receive greater consideration than satisfying local 'constituency' demands, officials can tailor plans and projections to make certain that quotas are fulfilled and priority items overfulfilled. The precise congruence of expectations with achievements for 17 out of County B's 29 projects (i.e., fulfilling the plan by exactly 100%) raises as many doubts about the adequacy of such goals for developmental purposes as feelings of satisfaction at having reached projected goals.

Horizontal and Vertical Linkages: Time and again in interviews with county officials, the following general pattern of coordinating linkages was enunciated (Figure 5):

Figure 5: Coordinating Linkages of County Governments



--------- preparing reports, requests, petitions

========= supervision, inspection, encouragement

———————— communication, coordination

Organizational life in South Korea is an intense experience and county government is no exception to this general characterization. Meetings and conferences, written communications, telephone calls, inspection and observation trips, and personal visits are extremely frequent, and virtually no official is left unscathed by this dizzying process. Many officials complained, in fact, that excessive reporting requirements greatly interfered with the conduct of their offices. Rather sterile presentations and "seminars" are almost a daily occurrance in Korean administrative life for those in a decision-making capacity.

Personal connections (called baek, a Koreanized version of "background") are vital to the success of most governmental affairs, whether the goal be the acquisition of a piece of office equipment, arranging for a transfer to the provincial capital, or securing funds for a long-sought developmental project in one's region. To establish and maintain these connections, generous gifts and deference are the order of the day, and there seems to be a high correlation between generosity and the achievement of one's goals. Viewed in this perspective, it is no wonder that Korean officials have as much intense interaction as

they do: not having the correct baek can spell failure for the most well-conceived project. It is important, therefore, to understand that personal interaction is by no means indicative of any real effort to coordinate activities among agencies or to harmonize conflicting goals and values. On the contrary, such pursuits often receive lower priority than the more highly-valued goal of securing instrumental compliance with personal ('private') demands. 'Public' and 'private' goods often lose their distinction in the Korean marketplace.

Thus, it was not uncommon to hear that despite monthly or even weekly conferences between county government and cooperative officials, for example, parties on both sides felt that their respective activities were uncoordinated or even at cross-purposes. In a somewhat different vein, township chiefs would be assembled at the county office for the purpose of receiving new project plans, and little or no public interest-oriented interaction between county and town leaders would take place. The town chiefs would merely reassure the county executive of their support and compliance, while the critical variable in the process, the degree to which actual compliance would reflect personal considerations or personal favors owed, would remain unspoken.

Supervision and Control: The observation or inspection visit of a higher level official, whether from the provincial government, the Ministry of Home Affairs, one of the other functional ministries, or from the President's personal staff, sets in motion a wave of overtime activities designed to assure the visitor of strict compliance with the guidelines set down and cheerful cooperation throughout the lower levels. Briefing charts are prepared, lavish entertainment arranged, and clerks and custodians frantically set to work scrubbing down the offices and clearing away unsightly debris. Again, as in the case of the frequent "coordinating committee" meetings discussed above, one wonders to what extent either party involved in this elaborate visitation ritual really accepts what is taking place at face value. The seriousness and objectivity of the report that will eventually be filed on the visit may well be a function of the visiting official's age and background: younger officials from the central ministries, often possessing American university degrees in public administration or development economics, could not be expected to adhere to the same set of values and behavioral norms as older bureaucrats trained in the old Japanese imperial system and accustomed to unquestioning deference and obedience.

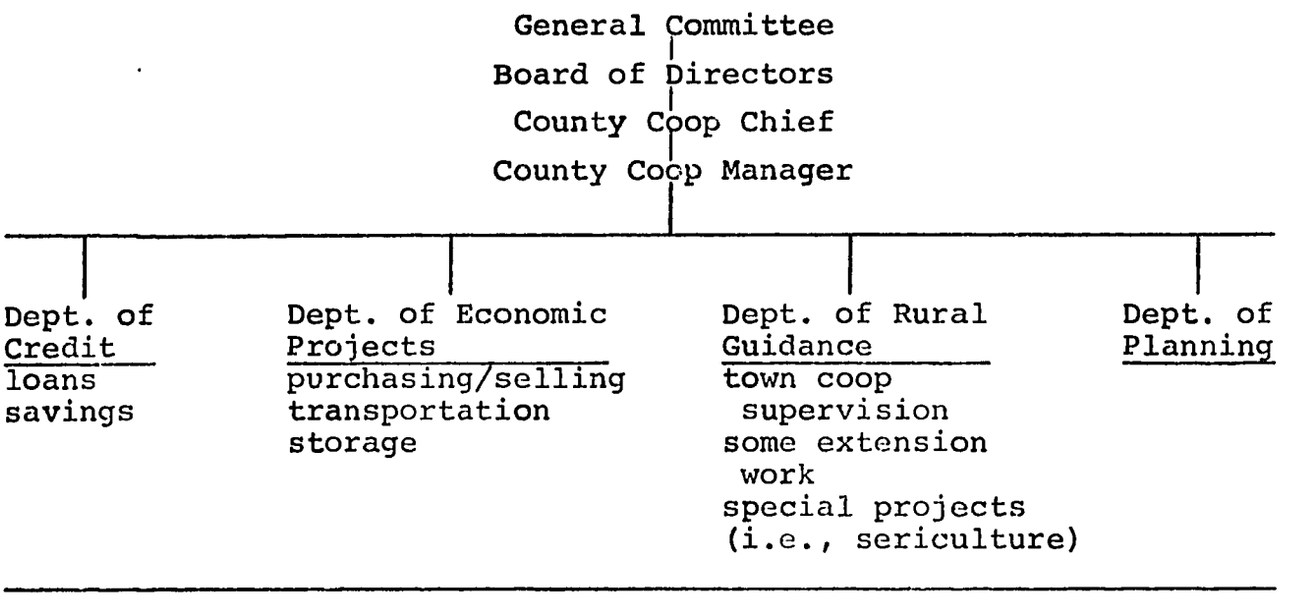
The manner in which my assistant and I were greeted by the two different county offices we visited is revealing in this respect: We arrived in County A unannounced and presented ourselves directly to the assistant to the county executive. Everyone was courteous, of course, and eventually helpful, but some time elapsed between our initial introductions and the point at which we were taken more seriously. In County B, on the other hand, everyone knew of our arrival beforehand through the office of the provincial vice-governor. We reached the county building one hour later than originally planned, and found, to our dismay, that the county executive had assembled in his office all of his section chiefs, the county cooperative manager, and the chief of the county Rural Guidance Office more than three hours before. Transportation was provided for us (we took the bus in County A) and each official in turn entertained us at a restaurant or tearoom. As it became clearer to these officials, however, that we had not been sent on an evaluative mission by the Korean or American governments, and that we were mainly interested in the daily operations of their office, interest in us declined markedly and favors diminished. Ultimately, the receptions afforded us in the two counties yielded rather similar results in terms of information collected and contacts established. But the initial impact of our arrival differed substantially according to who we were perceived to be.

Of course, besides the unexpected drop-in visits of higher-level officials, county governments are also subject to regular periodic audits by the provincial government. And, in a similar manner, county officials in the various functional sections are frequently out in the field talking to township and neighborhood association leaders and reporting on their activities to the county executive.

D. The County Agricultural Cooperative

Structure: The agricultural cooperatives in Counties A and B were organized along very similar lines, as shown in Figure 6. In County A, there was also a Coop Advisory Committee composed of the County Coop Chief, the County Executive, the County Rural Guidance Office executive, and the leaders of the various specialized cooperatives. This committee dealt with general organizational management and certain educational campaigns.

Figure 6: Organizational Structure of County Agricultural Cooperatives



The coop's General Committee was a legal device (whose membership consisted of all coop members in the county) responsible for selecting the County Coop Chief; in fact, this person was selected by the Central Committee of the NACF in Seoul. The County Coop Chief in turn appointed the County Coop Manager, who was the day-to-day administrative executive of the organization, and this appointment was subject to approval by the Board of Directors. Heads and lesser clerks of the various departments were appointed through competitive examinations administered by the central NACF.

Operating Activities: The functions and daily operating procedures of county coops are strictly regulated by the central NACF. Since the coop possesses a monopoly on fertilizer sales and to a large extent controls marketing, purchasing, and storage facilities for agricultural products as well as a cheap and fairly accessible credit source for the purchase of necessary agricultural inputs, it should not be surprising that in County A 86% of the farmers (defined as "one who owns a farm or participates in farm labor 60 or more days annually or owns five or more beehives") belonged to the coop. In County B, 87% of the farm population belonged. While membership requirements are identical (i.e., the purchase of at least one share of

coop stock valued at ₩1000--U.S. $2.50 at June 1973 exchange rate), County A insisted on purchase in two yearly payments of ₩500 each, while County B was more lenient and allowed four annual installments of ₩250 each.

The financial services offered by the coops are extensive and generally available to most farmers. However, farmers' traditional reliance on private mutual aid societies still seems to account for a substantial portion of the financial transactions that farmers must conduct, although precise data on this aspect of rural credit and savings are not available. Nonetheless, in County A per-household savings in the county coop averaged ₩19,858 (approximately U.S. $50)[1] and per-household loans for fertilizer, ₩4,255 (U.S. $11). The former figure represented 6% of the average yearly income for all farm households in South Korea in 1971, and the latter, 1%.

There are several types of coop loans, some available only to farmers and some for more general-purpose projects. General agriculture loans to member farmers are available on both short and long term repayment plans (the former for one year at 12% interest, the latter for two to ten years at 8-9%), and the amount that can be borrowed depends on the size of the individual farm (i.e., small farmers--below one hectare--up to ₩50,000 (U.S. $125); middle farmers--one to two hectares--up to ₩100,000 (U.S. $250); and big farmers--above two hectares--up to ₩300,000 (U.S. $750).) Loans can be used for the purchase of farm equipment (usually from the coop), for fertilizer purchase (only from the coop), for farm labor wages, or for special projects (sericulture, etc.) Under a "special crops" program, funds for this last purpose were more readily available and at slightly better terms in the summer of 1973, aided by a healthy injection of central Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry money. Another category of special loan was also available on a short-term basis, one year at 15.5% for amounts up to ₩500,000.

The interest rates cited above may seem inordinately high for a rural credit program designed to make funds accessible to even the smallest cultivators, but in the Korean context, they are very reasonable if not rather low. Private money clubs are known to carry interest rates of

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[1] At the June 1973 exchange rate. All of the following dollar figures are also given at the June 1973 rate of exchange.

50% yearly or even higher, and yet the attraction of this traditional institution, reinforced by a general distrust of governmental programs and a distaste for the complicated paperwork involved in taking a coop loan as contrasted with borrowing money from a cousin or neighbor, partially accounts for the inability of the government to do away completely with the usurious traditional rural credit structure.[1] In an attempt to co-opt the traditional system into the national economy, the government, through the New Community Movement, has started a campaign to form New Community Money Clubs in rural villages whereby the county coop would absorb part of the mobilized savings. This system offered 12% interest on savings and 30% on small, short-term loans (one indication of how high 'normal' interest rates are). Yet it hardly appeared competitive with a system that could promise a 50% return on relatively small sums within a year or less.

According to some coop officials, government efforts to assure at least a minimal amount of credit to even the smallest farmers have contributed to alleviating, in an unintended manner perhaps, the perennial shortage of food in the springtime when winter reserves run out. Several officials admitted that although small loans were ostensibly given for the purchase of fertilizer and other inputs, they were often used to buy rice and other foodstuffs by many subsistence farmers. While this may help prevent immediate starvation, it often contributes in the longer run to compelling these marginal cultivators to rely on the more expensive private credit system for the purchase of agricultural inputs when planting season arrives.

Provisions for penalizing defaulting on coop loans were technically strict, but the system seemed to allow for liberal interpretation of the law in certain instances. Failure to repay a loan on time when there was no legitimate excuse for non-payment would mean rejection of the next loan application, while failure due to some natural disaster would be tolerated provided the farmer eventually repaid it (with no additional interest burden). The manager of the County A coop told us, however, that in particularly severe hardship cases, repayment periods were extended even without 'legitimate' excuses, and occasionally debt burdens were quietly dropped.

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[1] According to KASS, p. 28, "a 1968 NACF farm credit survey shows that the average farmer borrowed...26.5 percent from credit institutions (almost exclusively NACF) and 73.5 percent from private sources."

E. The County Rural Guidance Office

Rural Guidance Offices (RGO) have the least secure institutional roots in the South Korean countryside. Perhaps for this reason, several RGO officials in the counties we visited spoke with concern regarding a felt disparity between higher-level tendencies to disregard RGO financial and organizational problems while demanding a wide range of extension-related services for farmers. The list of RGO activities is indeed impressive: in County A, the RGO was involved in providing a great deal of technical information to farmers; in trying to persuade farmers to improve production through seed improvement, through the use of chemicals to control pests and diseases, and through the introduction of cash crops and newer agricultural techniques; in giving direction to the 4-H Movement and to Life Improvement Groups for men and women; and in contributing money and materials to the development of model farms. But this involvement seemed severely restricted by both a shortage of funds and a lack of qualified personnel.[1]

Both RGO county offices we visited were relatively quiet and scantily equipped; part of the reason for the tranquility was that, it being rice transplanting season, most RGO workers were out in the fields instructing and advising farmers. But although RGO people worked closely with farmers, a sense of detachment, even isolation, from the county government office, to which the RGO was administratively responsible, was evident; in fact, this condition was freely admitted by the RGO executive in County A. He told us that on occasion he neglected to attend the monthly County Leaders' Meeting, because he felt there was little sympathy for his role and little respect for his position. In the previous year, the county had approved only 43% of his original budget request. Unlike most other ranking officials at the county level, this man was not a native of the province--he had been recruited and appointed by the central Office for Rural Development, as had many of his staff--and this meant that he did not possess the "political capital" that the older, more experienced "native" county officials had accumulated through years of interpersonal dealings. In a context where personal contacts and influence are so vital, the RGO lacked the prerequisites of achievement and success within the administrative system. This is not to say that the RGO did not

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[1] Nationally, in 1971, there were 6051 RGO personnel, or approximately one RGO worker for each 410 farm households. About half of RGO personnel had B.S. degrees. See KASS, p. 27. In the areas we visited, none of the workers had college training.

achieve substantial gains in its rural extension efforts; as we shall see shortly, the activities of the RGO are familiar to and generally respected by farmers. But administrative success is by no means a function of serving the people well in South Korea.

F. The Township Level

Formerly the center of administrative and political life in South Korea, the township has been transformed into a placid and relatively inert branch of the county government since 1961. There are town branches of both the agricultural coops and the Rural Guidance Offices, and incessant rounds of meetings, conferences, communications with higher levels, reception of visits from county and occasionally provincial officials. Written reports and statistical compilations preoccupy the township clerks and officials much as these activities take up the time of higher-level personnel.

Township executives and personnel are more likely to be local residents than county officials, and consequently local 'political' appointments as well as pressures based on longer-standing mutual obligations can be correspondingly more intense.

The township office has four functional sections, generally parallel to those of the county: Town Industry Section, Finance Section, General Affairs Section, and Family Registers Section (including military conscription registration). The maintenance of family registers is a long-standing activity of Korean townships. Recently, a New Community Movement section has been grafted on to the pre-existing organizational structure.

The major thrust of policy initiative is, of course, downward from the county, and town officials must carefully consider guidelines set forth by the county when drawing up the town budget. In the town we visited in County B, the township chief estimated the ratio of handed-down to locally-initiated projects to be at least 9:1. In the town in County A, the chief reported that of twelve special projects submitted to the county in the last year, eight were approved. Still, these accounted for only a small portion of the mandated township activities. Town A had the following budget breakdown for 1972:

1. Salary (administrative)	70.0%
2. Project expenses	2.4%
3. Custodial	2.7%
4. Miscellaneous	25.0%

Handed-down projects for this township included repairing and improving roads, ditches, dikes, and small bridges; building public playgrounds and public toilet facilities; installing sewage and water conduits and public wells; and other projects falling under the rubric of the New Community Movement. Special township projects included an electrification program, some larger bridge construction, and numerous small public works projects. One may question how the township managed to finance all of these projects with such a small percentage of its budget (itself relatively meager) allocated to project expenses. The answer lies partly in the process described earlier of having more plans on paper than are actually carried out and partly in the reliance on local informal or extralegal contributions of money and labor by individual farmers. This contribution system, another feature of traditional Korean rural social organization, is administered through the neighborhood associations or through even lower-level units.

For the most part, small-scale projects are hamlet, and not township, affairs. But since the township is the lowest-level official administrative structure in the local government system, official reporting and petitions from lower levels must be channeled through it. Thus, township officials are rather extensively involved in visiting or otherwise communicating with neighborhood association chiefs on an almost daily basis, collecting bits of information and transmitting new project tasks from the county.

When individual farmers have complaints (or more rarely, suggestions), they occasionally visit the township office to communicate their feelings. In Town B, for example, it was reported that an average of 3 or 4 farmers visited the township office daily for this purpose. Rarely do farmers go higher than the township level to bring an issue to the attention of public officials. The normal way of treating these affairs is to take up the individual complaint or request at a meeting of town section chiefs, with the final decision on disposition of the case coming from the township chief. In Town A, approximately 15 of 50 or so requests were approved through this process in the course of a year. Obviously, these 50 represented issues on which considerable consensus had been formed prior to their disposition at the township meeting; it would be rare for an individual farmer, much less a collective body such as a neighborhood association, to submit petitions on matters that were either highly controversial or trivial in farmers' minds. In this sense, a 30% approval rate (for only very small projects) is not especially high.

The township agricultural cooperative, regarded as the "primary" cooperative unit, has an organizational structure similar to that of its parent structure, the county coop, and divides some functions with the county level as follows:

County Coop Functions	Township Coop Functions
long-term loans	short-term loans
sale of large machinery	sale of small machinery
savings accounts for non-members	savings accounts for members
loans for non-members	sale of fertilizer

In addition, both townships we visited had coop "chain stores" that sold daily household necessities on a non-profit basis.

Town B had no township branch of a Rural Guidance Office, and so farmers often relied on the town government to transmit requests for various tests and technical information to the county RGO. Town A, however, did have a branch RGO with a staff of eight young people, all recent graduates of agricultural high schools. These were the people who, through pamphleteering, speaker cars, slide/movie vans, direct visits to farmers' homes and fields, and visits by farmers to the town RGO office, had the most direct access to individual farm households for extension services. Most RGO personnel we met seemed dedicated and industrious, but the odds against their actually convincing farmers to change 'outmoded' ways were formidable: most farmers with whom they had contact were at least one generation older than they, and this age (and experience) differential is almost insurmountable in the Korean context. In one particularly memorable scene at a farmer's house, we watched a young female RGO worker trying to convince an aged grandmother to 'clean up' her kitchen; the grandmother nodded her head in apparent agreement with the young girl's suggestions, and then went about her former business after the girl departed. Nonetheless, the RGO is the main source of testing equipment and information on crop diseases and agro-chemicals in the countryside, and one official told us that ten or more farmers personally visited the town RGO office daily.

G. Neighborhood Associations (Hamlet)

Some students of Korean bureaucracy have likened it to a pyramid, with the President standing alone at the apex and layer upon layer of intermediate strcutures between

him and the broad spectrum of masses at the bottom. However, in our visits to several rural hamlets[1] we received a somewhat different image of the overall structure when viewed systemically.

The hamlet chief is usually selected through a consensual process involving hamlet residents although his formal appointment comes through the county executive. He is the critical focal point of communication between individual farmers and the government. One hamlet chief, 41 years old, listed his positions as follows: Hamlet Chief, New Community Movement Leader, Chairman of the Hamlet Development Committee, Branch Leader of the Agricultural Cooperative, Policy Deputy, and Farm Improvement Committee Chairman. While a hamlet may possess a small community building (many are being constructed under the New Community Movement), the Neighborhood Association does not have functionally-divided sections or bureaus and employs no full-time civil servants. All functions and responsibilities collapse into one category and fall upon the head of the Neighborhood Association chief. Thus, if we choose to view the hierarchical structure of government as descending through a diminishing number of functionally-classified sections, from numerous ministries at the top to a single multi-role position at the bottom, the structure can be most usefully described as an "inverted pyramid."

Hamlet A (in County A) had 118 families (750 residents), while Hamlet B had 95. Both areas were involved mainly in the production of rice, barley, and only recently, silkworms. Hamlet B had a meeting hall that was also used as a small textile mill; Hamlet A had recently completed a New Community Movement building which served several functions: cooperative marketing services, rural guidance education, regular community meetings, and even marriage ceremonies. Both buildings were constructed partly with donations of money and labor by hamlet residents.

Several governing bodies form the Neighborhood Association in the hamlets. First, there is a regular once-a-year general meeting of all hamlet residents in December to pass on local projects and select leadership for the following year. Second, there is a Village Development

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[1] We have previously given hamlets the quasi-legal title of "neighborhood association." "Hamlet" connotes essentially a geographic and social entity, while "neighborhood association" refers to the same unit when viewed as an administrative structure.

Committee composed of hamlet notables who meet monthly to draw up specific proposals and prepare agenda items for the general meeting, as well as to advise the Neighborhood Association chief. Decisions on matters taken up in this committee, such as mandatory contributions for a small public works project, are legally binding in the sense that fines and other punishments can be levied against defaulters; but usually community pressure is enough to ensure compliance. Finally, there is a New Community Meeting composed of all hamlet residents, and at the time we visited, this meeting was very active in receiving newly-assigned tasks from higher levels and deciding on local projects. In Hamlet B, New Community Meetings were being held almost every night during the warmer months because of a constant stream of directives and 'suggestions' issuing from Seoul through the county and township offices.

In addition to these quasi-legal hamlet organizations, there are numerous types of collective aid societies, perhaps twenty in Hamlet B alone. These are the only private organizations in the hamlet that could be said to contribute in some way to rural development; all other 'voluntary' groups or clubs are government-sponsored and usually government-supervised.

Township officials visit the hamlets "many times every day" and, in addition, visits by county and even provincial officials at certain intervals are not uncommon. One outward symbol of compliance with various developmental projects falling under the rubric of the New Community Movement is a brightly-painted map of each hamlet standing at its boundary depicting all the projects underway in accordance with the "national spirit of revitalization." Each hamlet's map extolls its "self-help projects" in almost caricatured form, and these tableaux are surely designed as much to impress a high-level visitor as to depict real developmental accomplishments.

Besides the mandated and recommended tasks that hamlet residents are expected to perform (not to mention their daily farming efforts), hamlets are involved in special projects that depend almost entirely on local donations and are often pursued over long periods of time. The chief of the Neighborhood Association in Hamlet A was proud to inform us that his residents had already contributed ₩3,000,000 (U.S. $7,500) toward an electrification project; if they could raise another equivalent amount, then they could secure governmental aid to bring electricity to the hamlet. Hamlet B, located close to the administrative center of its township, was considerably better developed infrastructurally, but it was also involved in special projects,

albeit of a more modest scale than Hamlet A: first, it was trying to set up a coordinated farm labor pooling system (under the tutelage of the Rural Guidance Office); second, it was involved in attracting small-scale industrial enterprises (such as local spinning and weaving mills) to the area; and third, it was planting fruit trees on communally-owned land.

H. Farmers' Response to Government Initiative

A number of individual farmers were interviewed in the various places we visited, and their reactions to our questions are worth quoting at some length for the light they shed on the considerable gap that seems to exist between government and citizen perceptions of what rural development is all about. Before giving specific responses, it is possible to list some recurrent attitudinal findings for the interviewees as a group:

1. Personal participation and involvement in hamlet and New Community Movement affairs was high; indeed, the nature of the consensus around which Korean hamlet life is often organized makes nonparticipation virtually an impossibility.

2. Farmers could generally distinguish between the activities of the various local organizations that affect their lives: they knew that problems concerning pest control or new seed varieties were to be taken to the Rural Guidance Office, and not to the coop, for example. All farmers, of course, depended on the coop at the very least for fertilizer supplies and most seemed to have made some kind of financial transaction at their local coop.

3. Farmers were well informed about developmental activities through newspapers or the radio or through speakers linking each farmhouse with the township office.

4. While there were many complaints about the demands on their time and the inequities involved in land donations required for road-widening projects, most farmers agreed, however reluctantly, that they could see some positive good being derived from cooperative self-help of the type that the New Community Movement was attempting to foster.

5. Rarely could a farmer recall being asked his personal opinion on some governmental policy by a public official; even more rarely would a farmer volunteer his opinion to anyone higher than his own hamlet chief. (This, of course, was a function of relative wealth and position in the community.)

6. Few farmers could frame any kind of response to the question, "What should the government be doing to help you that it is not already doing?" except perhaps the most predictable one, "Give us more money." None suggested, for example, that counties or townships should have more freedom to carry out projects that are desired by local farmers, rather than merely respond to directives from higher levels. Suggestions of this kind seem to be almost unthinkable in South Korea.

Now let us turn to more specific responses to our questions on rural development programs as they affect individual farmers. It should be borne in mind that these are purely random interviews and do not constitute a scientific sample.

Farmer A: I'm the only one who has many pigs in our village. One day the hamlet chief showed me an official notice stating that if a farmer had more than ten pigs, the government would loan him ₩100,000. So I went to the Livestock Department in the town office to ask for money. The official didn't know anything about it at first, but after I told him I had seen the official notice, he finally remembered it, and informed me, "The government gave the province some money to give to farmers, but to qualify, you must have 200 pigs and complete facilities to raise pigs for export, and then you can receive the money!" So I asked the official if any farmer qualified in this county, and he replied, "No, no one. We sent the letter to your hamlet chief to find out if anyone would qualify."

Farmer B: The New Community Movement has its good points and bad points (a favorite Korean way of describing mostly the bad points). Farmers who are not forced to donate land to improve the roads like it. But farmers who lose their land don't get any compensation from the government, not even ten won. They have families and they have to live. The land is their food. The government tells the hamlet chief not to force people to donate their land, since this is a democratic country. So he goes to the farmers and instructs them to donate the land. He pleads with them every day. Finally farmers make the donation. ...If the Provincial Governor comes to the village, the farmers are not allowed to sleep. Some officials arrive in the village at dawn and order farmers to work on the road and clean the lanes to make a good impression. ...There are too many public officials. We work hard and pay taxes for their salaries.

Farmer C: The government wants us to save money. They tell us, "Before you cook rice, take out a handful and put it aside. In a couple of months you will have saved a lot of money." Everybody knows that's how to save money. But we must sell the rice to do other things, such as buy clothes and fuel, go to the doctor, and send the children to school. ...The government requires the farmers to plant new seed varieties. Farmers must obey. But if the crop is not as large as expected, farmers lose not only that crop but also their time and land which could have been used for other crops. Do you think the government takes responsibility for this? No. They ignore us.

Farmer D: I don't like the "Rat Killing Campaign" very much. When we buy rat poison at a drug store, it works very well, but when we get it from the government, it doesn't. The quality of the poison is poor and the rats don't eat it. We kill more dogs and cats than rats.

Farmer E: I worked in the township office for eleven years. Since I now work in the fields as a farmer, I can better appreciate the relationship between farmers and officials. Sometimes the government's policy is quite different from farmers' real needs. ...I think before an official instructs a farmer he should learn more about agricultural techniques.

Farmer F: We don't get enough fertilizer these days. Even though we have the money to buy it, we can't get it. ...The government sends a certain amount of fertilizer to each village. We have to divide it up according to the size of each farm. They say that the government exports fertilizer. Since the government can export it, why don't we have enough of it? I think farmers should be able to buy fertilizer on the private market.

Farmer G: In our hamlet one old farmer is very stubborn. He said, "If you want to take my land (for the New Community Movement) then kill me first." Then he lay across his paddies. All the younger farmers went to see him every day, and finally he gave up, after they first begged and later threatened him. ...The government says that all prices are frozen at 3% above last year's. I hear it on the radio every day. What about the price of soap? It used to be ₩30. I paid ₩80 for it the other day. Some prices go up 200%--but look at the price of rice: it stays the same. The government should not lie to us. Central officials should come to a hamlet and talk to farmers and ask them what they really want.

When they do inspect a hamlet, the county executive never takes them to a poor village. He always takes them to a model hamlet to make a good impression on them. After that, the model village receives more assistance than the poorer villages. That's not very fair.

Farmer H: There are too many farmers for an extension worker to teach. And sometimes farmers don't attend extension lectures. They think they know what he will say, and they have a lot of farming experience. They think it's the same old story, so perhaps 40 out of 100 attend. Farmers aren't very impressed by these extension agents.

Farmer I: The government sent cement to the hamlet for the New Community Project, but it's a waste of money because there are no wages for the workers who repair roads and build bridges. Who wants to work for free? So the hamlet sold 50 of the 100 bags of cement to pay the wages of the laborers. But the government doesn't know about this.

Farmer J: Our Rural Guidance worker has 200 farmers to take care of. Sometimes I don't see him for months. He often goes to areas where farmers are growing special crops or where there are model villages. ...Some years ago, every man wanted to be the hamlet chief, for it was a great honor. Now no one wants to be the chief because everyone knows how hard the job is and there is no remuneration. He is insulted by the villagers if he doesn't do a good job, and sometimes he has to spend his own money for hamlet projects. He has perhaps 20 or more meetings every month, so he doesn't have time to take care of his own farm.

Farmer K: I heard that there were eight steps in the New Community Movement and now we are at the second step. An official gave us a lecture the other day, saying, "When we reach the eighth step of the national development project, we will build a big house to cook the meals in one place." So I guess that if it comes true, I'll have to come to the village each morning with my family to eat breakfast. Isn't that nonsense? That's communism. Since we have no power we'll have to follow whatever they say.

Farmer L: There is a gap between the rich and the poor. The rich can use a New Community Road to carry their crops, but the poor lose their land and don't use the road so much since they don't have large crops. And the government said that since they gave us cement and iron we should work in our hamlet for free, so all the farmers went out to work for 50 days to build bridges and widen

the roads. If someone doesn't participate he must pay a fine. If there's no provisions for fines, probably no one will work. Since the farmer who works for wages can't earn any money his family will starve. So the poor get poorer and the rich richer.

Farmer M (the largest landowner in the township): The county office aids me with my livestock development and the coop loaned me money to buy large farming machinery. Rural Guidance officials visit often to teach me new farming techniques. Since I'm the only one in the county who runs a dairy farm, the county executive often visits me to encourage my efforts. I often go to the county office and the county coop. ...The New Community Movement is really necessary, not merely to widen the roads, but also for our spiritual development. Since the project began, the government has built many factories and buildings and has helped us have a better life. I think it's wonderful to be able to have such a nice life.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In aggregate terms, South Korean farmers are enjoying a more comfortable and more secure existence than they were ten or twenty years ago. Yet the comments (and complaints) of many farmers who talked with us during our field study stand as an articulate reminder of the danger of inferring 'real' development for individual farmers from aggregate statistics. Most of South Korea's farmers are still engaged in a day-to-day struggle against weather conditions, a lethargic and ponderous bureaucracy, and the vicissitudes of the marketplace, and seem to be able to do very little to control any of these.

Turning to the questions we raised at the beginning of Part II, our micro-level survey of local government and rural development has led us to the following conclusions:

1. South Korean farmers can probably influence decisions on routine and very minor local problems to the extent that they exercise authority by virtue of personal wealth, kinship relationships, secondary occupations (such as being a teacher or government official) and other related factors. But decisions on major policy questions are taken at higher levels and are not subject to local approval or control. "Participation" in rural development programs generally means responding obediently (or at least giving the appearance of responding obediently) to government programs.

2. Local officials are little inclined to solicit farmers' opinions on various government programs. The main reason for this is that local officials themselves have little say in the formulation of policy and their major concern is to respond to higher-level initiatives in a manner most likely to satisfy higher-level expectations. Of course, there is some degree of freedom to shape implementation procedures to local conditions, but only the wealthiest and most important farmers in an area will exercise influence over policy implementation.

3. The central government plans rural development policy in the context of its overall developmental goals, and thus allows those goals to determine policies for agriculture and rural welfare. Only in the most diffuse sense do central planners and policy-makers respond to farmers' personal needs--the major aim has been to develop the economy rapidly in the industrial sector with the least

amount of disruption to the rural sector. Only when a growing uneasiness among farmers manifested itself in the form of large numbers of migrants from the countryside crowding into the urban areas did the government begin to take greater notice of rural conditions. Evaluation of new government programs leaves much to be desired as distortion of information transmitted upwards occurs at each ascending layer of the administrative bureaucracy for reasons suggested earlier in this study.

4. Concepts of compliance and participation are hard to pin down. Compliance with national policy on the part of local officials is not at all a simple or straightforward phenomenon. Local plans and targets are specifically set so as to give the appearance of compliance, but the difference between the spirit and the letter of fulfillment of developmental objectives is often great. At the same time, there are some modes of popular participation, perhaps better called involvement, which while not what Westerners would call "participation," have some meaning and effect in making the system function relatively smoothly.

5. Virtually all local problems, routine or extraordinary, are under close scrutiny at levels higher than the township or even the county. Only the most minor infrastructural improvement projects are handled entirely at the local level, and even these are fitted into a wider provincial framework. Many problems of a more personal nature, however, are settled through informal mediation channels and rarely reach formal juridical status.

6. Rural conditions have been improving, and this improvement has accelerated in recent years. All too often, however, "change" has occurred largely in the physical appearance of things, in a direction that the government sees as more "modern," without greater attention given to chronic problems that afflict many farmers. The greatest single problem is the enhancement of rural incomes, and as we have already pointed out, the extremely small size of the bulk of the farms severely restricts the capacity of most farmers to rely on the production of grain crops to improve their living standard. Diversion of acreage to cash cropping to increase incomes puts an even greater strain on an already inadequate supply of basic food grains, and no solution seems yet to have been devised that will resolve this dilemma.

7. Farmers are not opposed to the idea of improving the landscape through the construction of wider roads, better dikes and dams, or new supplies of water, but many resent the demands made on their time and energies for projects that seem to benefit the richer farmers more than

the poorer ones. The New Community Movement has brought virtually the entire rural population within the fold of national development, but this intense personal involvement has not resulted in any real disaggregation of authority from higher to lower levels. New Community projects are drawn up and initiated at the highest levels and local leaders exercise autonomy only in the limited sense of dividing up allocated work tasks. The Movement is largely devoid of any ideological content more specific than such vaguely-enunciated goals as "increase incomes" or "expand exports." Moreover, the recruitment and training of local Movement leaders according to centrally-determined standards cannot but enhance the control of the central government over the lives of ordinary farmers and leave them without real local leadership. Whether the farmers in turn will see any contradiction between the expressed goals of the Movement (i.e., to encourage local initiative and self-help in the implementation of developmental projects) and the methods employed to fulfill these goals remains to be seen.

8. Rural local administration is conducted according to time-honored and tradition-bound procedures that are often more self-serving than public-serving. Without structural changes that will increase the pressure on local officials to be more accountable to the people they are serving and less to higher officials who demand strict adherence to central dictates, there is no likelihood that the pattern of administration will substantially change.

9. "Coordination" as an underlying problem of administration in South Korea and in most other developing countries has assumed the status of "tired cliché." In fact, there is a great deal of adjusting and bargaining at the interpersonal level in Korean public administration. Personal communications are intense. The problem, however, is not the intensity of interpersonal contacts, but their private versus public nature. Public time, funds, vehicles, and authority are virtually at the disposal of officials who wish to use them for private purposes. Public offices often become personal domains that are manipulated and abused in a number of ways. "Coordination" as a problem is only the tip of the iceberg.

10. The role of local governing institutions in rural South Korea has been to pre-empt to the greatest extent possible the personal decisions that farmers must make so as to insure their continued support for the larger political body of which they are a critical element. Any relinquishment of central control would probably introduce a degree of uncertainty and instability into rural areas

that the national leadership would find politically unacceptable. It is true that there is a national security problem, and that Korean farmers have traditionally been the passive instruments of the central elite. But these two factors notwithstanding, development in terms of rural structural change is quite unlikely to be the consequence of rural local government as presently constituted.

Peasant and Bullock by Chuah Theah Teng
From the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.